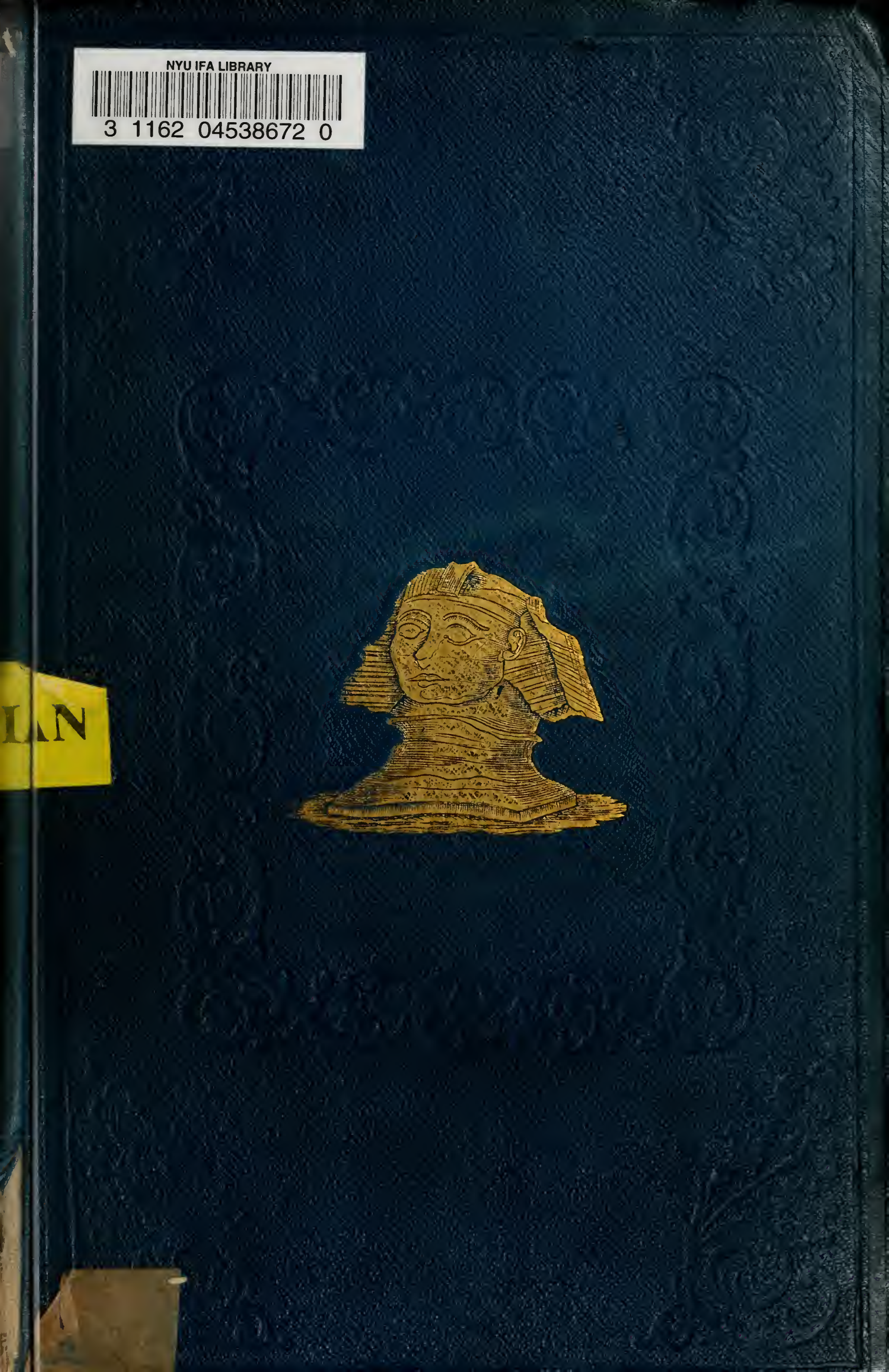

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FAÇADE OF THE GREAT ROCK TEMPLE OF IBSAM

New

A PILGRIMAGE

TO

THE TEMPLES AND TOMBS

OF

EGYPT, NUBIA,

AND PALESTINE,

IN 1845-6.

BY MRS. ROMER,

AUTHOR OF "THE RHONE, THE DARRO, AND THE GUADALQUIVIR,"
&c.

"Tout est tombeau chez un peuple qui n'est plus."—CHATEAUBRIAND.
"Nilus heareth strange voices."—SIR THOMAS BROWNE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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A WORD TO THE PUBLIC.

"Rien n'appartient à rien, tout appartient à tous,
Il faut être ignorant comme un maître d'école,
Pour se flatter de dire une seule parole
Que personne içi bas n'ait pu dire avant vous."

ALFRED DE MUSSET.

SINCE the facilities of steam-navigation have brought the Nile within the scope of everybody's possibility, and rendered Constantinople an easier undertaking than the Giants' Causeway formerly was, so much has been published upon the East, that the subject has been completely exhausted by minds of every calibre, and books of Oriental travel have become a mere drug. It therefore looks like a work of supererogation,—a squeezing of the squeezed lemon,—to endeavour to extract a new idea from so worn-out a theme, or attempt to add a word to that which has already been so often and so well said. But, such is the incorrigibility of human nature, — of female human nature, above all,—that, with the pages of Kinglake and Warburton staring one in the face,

and appearing silently to forbid all—competition was I going to say? but that were impossible!—the Biddy Fudge spirit will not be kept under; and not a woman turns her face, Hadji-like, towards the far East that does not fancy she is bound to add her mite to the general fund of knowledge or entertainment, to record some impression which may have escaped a mightier mind, or correct some mistake which may have been perpetrated by a more careless one. And, consequently, every fair wanderer who trusts herself to the Great Oriental at Southampton, or to the French steamers at Marseilles, for conveyance to the land of the Pharaohs, would as soon think of embarking without her *sac de nuit* as without a certain mysterious-looking little clasped volume, carefully closed with a Bramah lock, of which the tiny key is appended to her watch-chain, and whose blank leaves are destined to receive the "concentrated essence" of observations which are at a later period to be diluted into two or three respectable-looking octavo volumes.

I speak from experience; for, although I do not plead guilty to the locked album, and that I protest to having left home under a solemn vow and promise to myself, that nothing but the inevitable duty of writing family letters should in-

duce me to stain my fingers with ink during my absence, yet, no sooner was I on the move than I found the *cacoethes scribendi* creeping upon me; and, unable long to resist the contagion, I began most vehemently to deface all the blank paper within my reach, and one morning detected myself terminating a long letter, addressed to no particular person, and certainly not destined for the post-office.

I was, of course, very properly ashamed at thus finding myself out breaking faith with — myself; but I soon capitulated with my conscience; for, after a little of that feminine special pleading which so often "makes the worse appear the better reason," I began to discover not only "*des circonstances attênuantes*" for my delinquency, but even laudable motives; and I came out of court, where I had been judge, jury, plaintiff, and defendant, fully acquitted. To set forth the arguments that passed on all sides would be far too lengthy an undertaking for the limits of a preface; but the summing-up of the case was this: that as post-office regulations restricted my correspondence with my family to monthly communications, which could not by any possibility contain a hundredth part of what I was daily seeing, and that, as I should even soon be removed be-

yond the reach of post-offices in those unsophisticated regions where letters are unknown,—and, moreover, as there were no restrictions whatever upon my correspondence with —— ——, which was of a nature to be altogether independent of postal arrangements, the latter should be persevered in, and should eventually be communicated to all my loving friends and acquaintance, and stand in lieu of the despatches, which I had no means of regularly forwarding to them.

Who —— —— may be, is a question of very minor importance. We petticoated pilgrims are always understood to possess by prescriptive right an epistolary "Mrs. Harris," whom none of our most intimate associates have ever been able to meet by any chance or accident, either in our drawing-rooms, or our boudoirs, or even to discover ensconced in the most obscure corner of our Broughams, driving round the solitudes of the Regent's Park. Yet these invisible darlings are such paragons of sense, sentiment, and above all of sympathy, they take so much warmer an interest in our affairs than we do ourselves, they are such perfect second editions of our very selves, that they would be unable to survive our occasional absences in foreign countries, did we not daily communicate to them our impressions,

fresh as they rise to our minds, in letters of no ordinary dimensions. And therefore it is, that even when prostrate from the effects of sea-sickness, or half-dead from a long day's ride over roadless mountains, or battered and bruised by some unlucky fall from our horse, we fly to our writing implements before we are well housed in our inn, and forget the ills that travellers are heirs to in the delightful task of chronicling our small beer to allay the thirsting affection of our anxious correspondent. But we are well repaid for these little sacrifices of ease to friendship by the dear disinterested creatures on our return home, bringing us our own letters carefully numbered and tied up, and entreating us, *by all the pleasure they themselves have derived from their perusal*, "to give them to the public!"

Alas! if the public were imbued with Mrs. Harris's indulgence—or, I ought rather to say if dear Mrs. Harris possessed the discrimination of the public, the counsel would not so often prove to be a fatal one!

But our *amour propre* is too easily flattered by such suggestions; and forgetting that the womanish gossip, the eschewing of all political questions, the inevitable egotisms that must characterize a plain unvarnished detail of passing

scenes, the familiarity of epistolary style which reduces writing to conversation—to mere chit-chat, if you will—are elements all too flimsy to satisfy the solid cravings of the public, we suffer ourselves to be tickled into a too easy acquiescence, and are only aroused to a just sense of our folly when those agreeable sensations are replaced by a stinging application of the nettles of criticism.

Courteous reader (for courteous, I venture to hope you will prove to me), need I add that all this generalizing applies particularly to my own case? Or need I suggest that, if *ennui* should creep upon you during the perusal of these Volumes, and force you to close them with a yawn or an impatient exclamation that they contain nothing new—nothing that you have not already heard better told more than fifty times—you will exercise justice in the midst of your severity, and instead of directing the whole weight of your censure upon my devoted head, reserve a due proportion for the real delinquent—Mrs Harris!

Paris, July 26, 1846.

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A PILGRIMAGE

TO THE

TEMPLES AND TOMBS OF EGYPT,

&c.

CHAPTER I.

MALTA.—VALETTA.—CASAL CRENDI.—HAGIAR CHEM.—PHŒNICIAN IDOLS.—MELITA.—PREPARATIONS.

Malta, Oct. 15, 1845.

SAFELY landed at Valetta! Let those who suffer physically and morally in the same degree that I do at sea imagine the delightful contrast of finding oneself in the clean, spacious, airy rooms of a Malta Hotel, after being "cabined, cribbed, confined," three mortal days and nights in the berth of a steamer, even although that steamer should be a first class English Mail packet. True that the one which conveyed us hither from Marseilles, left nothing to be desired on the score of accommodation, good living, and the kindest and most gentlemanly attentions, on the part of its

commander, Lieutenant Aplin, of the Royal Navy, (to whom I must ever feel deeply indebted, for the considerate forethought with which he administered to my comfort on board the Acheron); but alas! such are the absorbing effects of sea-sickness, that nothing is thought of for the time being, but one's own selfish quota of sufferings, and it is only when they are over, that one remembers gratefully how much was done to alleviate them.

We were fortunate in having a fair wind; it blew what seamen call "half a gale," but to *me* it appeared that we were driven on by a couple of hurricanes tacked together; such was the motion of the vessel, that everything moveable in my cabin was dashed to the ground; and my dressing-case and carpet-bag, the only objects that escaped the general destruction, danced the Polka throughout the whole of the first night, amidst the fragments of cups and glasses, scattered about by the first tremendous lurch of the steamer; and when, at the end of thirty-six hours, I ventured to creep out of my berth, my sides were black and blue from the effects of the rude rocking which had accompanied that stormy lullaby. Very happy we all were to find ourselves in the harbour of Malta, at ten o'clock on Tuesday night; and as

we stepped ashore at Valetta, I thought that the city of the warrior-monks had never looked so beautiful as in the silence and repose of that calm moonlight hour.

And beautiful it is, whether in the brightness of the noonday sun, when its streets are filled with a population rendered motley by the mixture of English uniforms and native costumes, that show there in picturesque contrast, or, in that more subdued light just alluded to, when the oriental aspect of the buildings, half-illumined by the moonbeams, half-buried in shadow, assume the characteristics of an exquisite theatrical decoration, and scarcely a living creature is to be seen in the high-ways or bye-ways to break the deep stillness of the scene. One might then almost fancy oneself transported two centuries back to the palmy days of the Knights of St. John, and expect to be challenged from the bastions by some steel-clad soldier of the Cross, instead of the Highland sentinels pacing backwards and forwards there. But, indeed, whether in sunshine or moonlight, such is the peculiar charm of Valetta, that I do not think it yields in beauty, to the fairest cities of Italy or Spain.

When I was here three years ago, the heats of July precluded my visiting any of the remarkable

sites that the island contains; they are but few, and certainly when compared with the monuments possessed by other lands are deficient in artistical merit; yet not to see them would argue an apathy foreign to my nature. Accordingly one of our first excursions has been to Casal Crendi, a Maltese village seven miles from Valetta, in the neighbourhood of which, (that is to say about a mile and a half further,) is to be seen at once the greatest antiquity and the greatest novelty contained in the island. Within the last five or six years excavations were made there under the direction of the late governor, Sir Henry Bouverie, which brought to light the remains of what is supposed to have formed part of either a Phœnician Temple, or a place of sepulture,—probably both, since the human bones and the rude stone altars discovered in some of the chambers would infer that it had been devoted to either purpose. No inscription has been found to give any data of these remains, but their Druidical form, (or, what is technically termed, Cyclopean architecture,) argues the remotest antiquity. The chambers are oblong in form, and the larger ones rounded at one end; the walls and partitions composed of huge blocks of stone placed upright on the ground; the windows and

doors are of the rudest construction, and there are no attempts at either architectural or sculptural ornament, beyond the surface of the stone of which the altars and seats are composed being irregularly punctured with small holes. The spot where these remains were discovered has for time immemorial, been indiscriminately called by the Maltese, *Hagiar Chem*, (the stones of Chem,) and *Gebel Kéem*, or, " the mountain of worship." The latter denomination proves the existence of some traditionary record of their original purpose, and corresponds with the opinion pronounced by most of the scientific men who have visited the place, namely, that Hagiar Chem was the religious temple of some Phœnician city, which once existed in the immediate neighbourhood, and the vestiges of which may hereafter be brought to light as this curious remnant of bygone ages has been.

As no inscription or hieroglyphic was discovered in this rude temple, it may be inferred that its construction dates to a period prior to the use of letters; and yet one is bewildered to account for the raising and superposing of such enormous blocks of stone, without the aid of such mechanical powers as would argue an advanced stage of civilization. There is, however, no attempt at

art or symmetry, or even regularity, at Hagiar Chem; no arch, no column; the apertures evidently meant for doors and windows are shapeless orifices, formed only of two large, upright monoliths, surmounted by a third, laid across them. I fear that you will not be able to make anything out of this confused description; but, like most persons who have just visited something curious, and whose minds are still full of what they have seen, I am apt to fancy that I can *paint in words*, and through those vehicles image forth my own impressions to others; whereas, I ought to remember that I have never yet received any correct idea either of picture, prospect, or monument, from mere description, even though that description were couched in language the most vivid and elaborate, — that in such cases one stroke of the pencil is worth a thousand of the pen,—one glance of the eye worth all the pencils in the world,—and, consequently, all written descriptions worth little more than so much waste-paper.

Yet, if we wanderers did not attempt description, we should be accused either of seeing nothing, or of travelling without profit to ourselves and others; therefore, in order to convince you that I am not to be classed among those who

think only of taking their ease in their inn, I shall continue "to bestow my tediousness upon you" without compunction, whenever an opportunity occurs.

In the little museum of the government-library here, I saw eight images, which were discovered in the temple at Hagiar Chem, and are supposed to be either Phœnician idols, or images of the dead who were interred there. They are small, of the most uncouth workmanship, the most grotesque forms, and are all headless. Two of them are composed of terra cotta; the remainder are of Malta stone. Although without heads, their incomplete state does not arise from any mutilation, as the construction of the necks, and sundry holes bored in them, show that heads could be affixed to them with strings, or rivets, at will; and it may from thence be presumed, that whenever the race to whom they belonged were either expelled, or migrated from their settlement, they carried with them the heads of their idols.

But who were they, the dwellers of that rude spot? A human skull discovered in the same place with the statues, and deposited also in the government-library, is, by its peculiar formation, evidently of the Ethiopian race, which would militate against the received opinion, that the Phœ-

nicians were the first people who colonized the island of Malta. Curiosity has, in this instance, nothing to grapple with but conjecture; the skull may be that of a slave, or of a sacrificed captive, and not of a colonist; but, if one so ignorant as myself might venture a surmise, where so many learned persons have refrained from offering an opinion, I should place the date of these ruins to a far earlier period even than Phœnician colonization, which, wherever it transported itself, left indications of a more advanced progress in the arts than is here discoverable. For instance, if we admit for a moment that side of the *vexata quæstio* which attributes those mysterious monuments, the Round Towers of Ireland, to Phœnician origin, it is impossible to reconcile the idea that the shapeless temple of Hagiar Chem could have been coeval with, or constructed by, a people who were the artificers of those beautiful and symmetrical monuments. In short, its very uncouthness authorizes the inference that it was the first attempt of an untaught people in architectural or monumental art.

Are you tired of my disquisition? if you are not, I am! I find that I have been swimming out of my depth, without being furnished with the cork-jacket of science to keep me afloat; and

if I do not make the best of my way back to the point from whence I started I must surely sink.

Nevertheless, I must own to you that I have already plunged headlong into another controversy, which is not only a subject of deep and sacred interest to the Maltese, but one in which their national *amour propre* appears to be closely involved. I allude to the locality of St. Paul's shipwreck, and to how far argument preponderates in favour of the Melita of the Adriatic Sea over the Melita of the Mediterranean. The Maltese will listen to no argument that does not point out their own island as the theatre of that event in the great Apostle's life; however, there is a considerable majority against them among more disinterested disputants; and I confess that when I was last here I inclined to the Adriatic side of the question, my opinion being founded upon St. Paul's own words (Acts, chap. xxvii, v. 27). But, on my recent passage from Marseilles to Malta I had an opportunity of overhearing the question most ably and dispassionately discussed by an English gentleman employed under government in the island; and there appeared to be so much reason and probability in his view of the question, that my own preconceived notions have been greatly staggered by them.

You have only to look over the map to judge of how far Mr. S.'s argument (which I herewith give you) deserves consideration. When St. Paul departed from the island where he had been shipwrecked, (Acts, chap. xxviii. v. 11—13,) he embarked in a vessel that had wintered at that island on its way from Alexandria to Puteoli (Naples). Now for that vessel to have gone to the Melita of the Adriatic, which lies off the Dalmatian coast, would have been immensely out of the way; whereas Malta is exactly in the direct course between Alexandria and Puteoli. Moreover, Malta was a place of trade, and in all probability the vessel discharged there a cargo of wheat from Egypt, and took in a cargo of cotton, for the growth of which Malta was then noted. Besides, St. Paul mentions that in their progress they touched at Syracuse, which would have been again out of the way for a vessel voyaging from the Adriatic Melita to Puteoli. For assuming that he sailed from the Adriatic Melita, it would have been unnecessarily dipping down to the southward to touch at Syracuse, and from thence he must have again steered northward in order to regain the course by Reggio and the Straits of Messina; whereas Syracuse lies in the direct and unavoidable course from Malta to those Straits,

through which, under either supposition, St. Paul decidedly passed.

I think I have given you enough and too much of description for one day, and I shall therefore release you for the present, and resume when the day of my departure from Malta is decided upon.

October 24th.

I have been perforce drawn away from the contemplation of Cyclopean remains and Scriptural controversies, to plunge into the vulgar details of the commissariat preparations which our approaching voyage to Egypt necessitates, and have literally been over head and ears in portable soup, bottled porter, soda water, potted meats, maccaroni, rice, hams, tongues, pickles, fish-sauces, sugar, tea, wine, and I know not what else besides, with which we must provide ourselves previous to commencing the ascent of the Nile, where, it would appear that fertile as that country is, provisions, and all sorts of Christian comforts are scarce. We are also obliged to take with us from hence, beds, bedding, and household linen; in short, our preparations have already swelled to such formidable proportions that we look as though we were bound for India. And yet much more remains to be procured at Alexandria and Cairo in the

shape of breakfast and dinner canteens, kitchen utensils, &c. &c. &c. But the first and most indispensable acquisition for Egyptian travellers is a good Dragoman, and we have secured the services of one who has been highly recommended to us, and bears excellent testimonials from the persons he has already attended in that capacity. He is an Egyptian Turk, his name is Mohammed Abdul Atti, preceded by the title of Hadji (for he has performed the pilgrimage to Mecca, and no Moslem who has done so would forfeit the proud prerogative contained in those five letters), and he appears to be a most respectable, intelligent young man, and has already shown himself of great use by the judicious directions he has given us concerning the quantity and quality of stores that we are to take to the African shores.

So much for the creature-comforts which, alas! earth-born as we are, form so preponderating a consideration in all the arrangements into which mankind enter for their amusement or gratification. But other preparations of a higher nature have been required in the shape of books and maps relating to the regions I am about to visit; and in these I have derived the most valuable assistance from Mr. Muir of the library here, whose hints have been of the greatest possible use

to me in many ways. Not only has his judgment been serviceable in pointing out what I ought to elect, and what to reject; but he has, in the most disinterested manner, lent me books which he might naturally have tempted me to purchase, and has indeed placed his whole library at my disposition ever since I have been here. Among other kindnesses, Mr. Muir has lent me an English side-saddle to take with me, an object which, in the ignorance of what would be required in such a journey, I neglected providing myself with on leaving home; indeed, his zeal and obliging attentions have been unceasing, and can never be sufficiently commended by me; and I should be ungrateful indeed did I not eagerly testify to my grateful sense of them, and of the obligations they have laid me under to him.

We have secured our passage in the French steamer L'Alexandre, which will arrive here from Marseilles, on the 27th, and is to leave on the evening of the same day for Alexandria; and these preliminaries having been all settled, we shall subside into a state of idle repose during the remainder of our stay here.

Farewell then, until I reach the shores of Egypt!

CHAPTER II.

VOYAGE.—ARRIVAL.—PORT OF ALEXANDRIA.—LANDING.—ALEXANDRIA.—FELLAHS.—POMPEY'S PILLAR.—CEMETERY.—CLEOPATRA'S NEEDLES.—ANCIENT ALEXANDRIA.—FIELD OF BATTLE.—POLITICAL VIEWS.—FORTIFICATIONS.—THE VICEROY'S PALACE.—DATE PALMS.—SOIREE.

Alexandria, Nov. 1, 1845.

We embarked in L'Alexandre French steamer at Valetta in the evening of the 27th of October, and at midnight left the port. A magnificent vessel fitted up with an elegance and comfort formerly unknown in such craft, very few passengers, and those few most agreeable ones, a transparent atmosphere, and a placid sea, gave us a fair promise of a prosperous and pleasant voyage, which was fully realized, for not one cross event occurred, not one dark cloud arose to mar the general harmony. For the first two days we did not behold a sail, or the appearance of any living thing upon the wide waters except ourselves; but on the third morning some visitors reached us in the shape of two little birds, land-ones, driven from

the African coast, which, after fluttering coquettishly about the rigging for a short time, perched upon the lower ropes, and at last grew so familiar as to descend to the deck, and hop about in search of flies. One of the officers of the Alexandre, carried away by his love of sport, ran for his gun, and would thoughtlessly have repaid the confidence placed in man by these harmless little wanderers, by depriving them of life; but a word from us checked the destructive impulse, and the little birds were suffered to claim our hospitality unharmed, while the rifle and its master found better sport in a shoal of porpoises which came within gunshot a short time afterwards.

At noon, on the 31st, symptoms of nearing the land became manifest in the number of ships of all sizes and classes which approached us from the direction of Alexandria. Mohammed, perched aloft in the rigging, which he had ascended with the agility of a cat, was the first to salute the African shores; but so low and flat is the coast of Egypt that we, on the deck, could not distinguish Alexandria itself until we were quite near to the entrance of the harbour. The navigation there being difficult and dangerous, on account of the sunken rocks which abound, an Arab pilot came on board, a fine looking old Moslem, whose dark

countenance, crimson turban, green vest, full white drawers, bronze-coloured legs and arms, and free, graceful movements, contrasted strikingly with the European aspect and habiliments of the Commandant of the Alexandre as they stood side by side on the bridge connecting the two paddle-boxes; the Arab directing the movements of the steamer and carrying on a shouting conversation with the wild looking seamen in his own little boat, which had been taken in tow by us, and with its occupants was literally drenched by the spray from our paddles; the Frenchman, with telescope in hand, deferentially listening to him.

And now every eye was strained to catch a first distinct glimpse of the antique "Land of Egypt" — the land of mystery and monuments — the cradle of science and the arts—the fruitful source from whence learning and refinement flowed into other countries to redeem them from the darkness and barbarism into which she herself has fallen after having been the first among the nations of the earth! and we all asked each other what we felt at the sight; and, strange to say, the answer from each individual was almost the same, and a lack of enthusiasm was generally and unblushingly owned to prevail! Still, the scene was striking as we entered the port; and the active and war-

like aspect of the fine harbour full of shipping, and amongst them many men-of-war, from whose sterns floated the Egyptian flag, with its white crescent and star upon a blood-red ground, impressed us with a favourable impression of the Pasha's navy. To the right stretches a long sandy ridge, bristling with windmills innumerable, betokening plenty, and therefore beautiful in the eyes of the utilitarian, although unsightly in those of the artist. To the left appears the light-house of Alexandria, occupying the site of the famous Pharos which once was numbered amongst the wonders of the world. In the centre, overlooking the port and close to the water's edge, is the palace of Mohammed Ali, a spacious, solid-looking white building; and far behind, towering in solitary grandeur above all the surrounding structures, is Pompey's Pillar, springing from an eminence which once formed the centre of ancient Alexandria, and appearing to the stranger's eye as a landmark of the past—all that remains to attest the bye-gone glories of the fallen city he is about to enter. Thus far, as you will perceive, nothing Oriental, nothing African, in the physiognomy of the place; neither Mosque nor Minaret to be descried; and as we cast anchor, at five o'clock, immediately opposite the

Viceroy's palace, a band of music on board of the admiral's ship,* a fine seventy-four, struck up the "Parisienne" most horribly out of tune. This was the first practical proof we received of the supremacy which everything French has attained in this country;—I believe that even had the air been performed with all the precision of a German band, we should have objected to it at that moment, as being out of keeping with the people and the place; nay, I am not sure that I could have even tolerated "Rule Britannia" just then, so discordantly did everything European jar with my Egyptian aspirations.

Landing at Alexandria is a most formidable affair. As soon as a steamer appears in sight, troops of camels and asses, with their noisy drivers, hasten down to the landing-place, and before the inexperienced stranger is aware of what is about to happen to him, he beholds his baggage carried off and piled upon one of the kneeling camels by a score of half-naked, one-eyed Fellahs, and finds himself seized in the arms of somebody, and lifted, whether he will or no, upon a donkey, to the manifest disappointment of a dozen clamorous expectants, who shout forth in English, in a variety of tones: "Want a donkey, sir?"—"Very good

* The Egyptian fleet is commanded by Saïd Pacha, one of the Viceroy's sons.

donkey, sir, better than a horse."—"Go to Pompey's Pillar, sir?"—"Dat donkey go very bad."—"My donkey go faster than steam-boat!!" And fast indeed they do go, and away the new comer is hurried to the great square of Alexandria, where the two European hotels, frequented by travellers, are situated, before he has made up his mind at which of them he will put up.

I was spared the disagreeable bustle attending the general landing (which my companions were obliged to undergo), through the kind offices of Mr. Stevens, of the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Company, who gave me shelter on board the Ariadne, whilst he most efficiently superintended the landing and clearing through the custom-house of my luggage, and secured rooms for our party at the Hôtel de l'Europe. I did not, therefore, set foot upon the soil of Egypt until the camel and donkey persecution had ceased, and then, to my surprise, found in waiting an European carriage driven by an Arab coachman, which transported us quietly and comfortably to our hotel.

Having decided upon only devoting a day or two to Alexandria at present, and leaving the labour of sight-seeing to our return, we commenced our ramble by times yesterday morn-

ing by a drive to Pompey's Pillar. Nothing that we had yet seen, either externally or internally, in point of architecture, had given us the idea of an Egyptian city ; the great square, in which we are lodged, with its numerous Consular residences and its spacious hotels, looks thoroughly European; and the Frank quarter in which it stands is composed of mean-looking wretched streets, where every second house bears the name and calling of some French, Italian, or Greek tradesman. But in going to Pompey's pillar, we passed by the Arab quarter, occupied solely by the Fellah population of Alexandria; and there most certainly a novel sight met our eyes, and we were introduced to a personal acquaintance with the misery and debasement to which the wretched population of Egypt is reduced by the oppressions of an arbitrary government and a despotic ruler. Yet in the midst of a squalor and poverty unequalled perhaps in any part of the world, these poor Fellahs, lodged in mud hovels sometimes too low to admit of their standing upright in them, scantily fed with the worst and coarsest food, covered over only with a blue cotton shirt, and their children completely naked, contrive to preserve a semblance of cleanliness about their habitations which is not to be found in the villages of Ireland

and Scotland. The streets are scrupulously swept, and not a vestige of animal or vegetable refuse is to be discovered even in any remote corner, nor does any disagreeable effluvium offend the sense of smelling as one walks through those narrow ways, bordered by houses such as we should consider scarcely good enough to shelter our pigs in England, and inhabited by a people notoriously unclean in their persons. Many of them were seated outside of their dwellings, the women covered to the eyes in a large blue cotton wrapping cloth, which, with a pair of loose trousers of the same materials, forms their only garment, and is fastened over the nose either by a brass ornament, a row of small coins, or a few coral beads, and wearing massive bracelets of silver or brass upon their naked tattooed arms; the children without a vestige of clothing even upon those who appear to be nine or ten years old, and their abdomens frightfully distended from the immoderate use of water which is their only beverage. Poor little wretches! they appear to me to possess neither the lineaments nor the gaiety of infancy; and the state of their eyes, for the most part affected with ophthalmia and covered with flies, filled me with pity for their neglected condition. The manner in which they are car-

ried by their mothers, astride upon one shoulder, has something patriarchal and picturesque in it; indeed, the whole bearing and carriage of these bare-limbed women is graceful in the extreme, and when they are carrying their well-poised water-jars upon their heads without the assistance of either hand, no Andalusian could tread the earth with greater freedom and grace.

But if I allow the Fellahs to take up so much of my time and paper, I shall have none left to carry you with me to Pompey's Pillar,—not that I intend to inflict upon you a catalogue of its proportions, which every school-boy knows, or ought to know, so often have they been recorded. That which is far less certain is, by whom it was erected, and to whom dedicated; for, although the name of Pompey has been pompously attached to it, and it has even been asserted that his head was buried beneath, the prevalent belief now is that the shaft (one entire and noble block of granite,) once appertained to the temple of Serapis, and that the pedestal and capital (which bear evident traces of the decline of the arts), were at a later period added in honour of Diocletian, to whom the column was then dedicated. In short, that it is not purely an Egyptian monument, but of the time of the Roman domination, is evident.

Champollion discovered that it had been constructed upon a mass of antique remains, bearing the date of Psammetichus the Second (perhaps the royal oval); these were probably brought from Memphis, or from the temples of Upper Egypt, when Alexandria became the capital of the Ptolemies. Doubtless, under the mounds of rubbish and sand which surround this colossal pillar, and which occupy at least one-third of the site of modern Alexandria, many precious relics of Egyptian splendour are buried; but there appears to be no attempt at excavation, — no attempt even to remove those unsightly heaps which impart so indescribable an air of discomfort and desolation to the place. Some barbarians from my own country have painted upon the pedestal of Pompey's Pillar, in black letters a foot long,—" WILLIAM THOMSON, OF SUNDERLAND;" and on the summit is scrawled, in still larger characters, " LES QUARANTE MONTAGNARDS," probably to commemorate the visit of those wandering minstrels (now perambulating Egypt) to this venerable relic of a fallen empire. These are fit *pendants* to the " TRY WARREN'S BLACKING AND DOCTOR EADY'S PILLS," traced by some aristocratic hand upon the Great Pyramid; — but when will such Vandalisms cease? or if, alas! those who

run *will write*, when will they leave behind them evidence that they have not travelled in vain, and that the solemn and almost awful presence of the oldest monuments in the world has replaced such schoolboy trivialities by higher inspirations, —nobler, and more appropriate reflections?

Returning from the pillar, we passed by the great Moslem cemetery of Alexandria, a dreary place of stones, far spreading around, without a blade of grass, or a cypress-tree, to break the burning monotony of the sandy soil. Two or three funeral processions were approaching it; the bodies, laid upon a wooden tray, and covered with a cotton cloth, were irreverently borne along at a quick trot, upon the shoulders of four men, and behind followed the mourners, some chanting, and others uttering the conventional funeral howl; but there appeared to be no real woe in the thing, — an indecent haste to be rid of the lifeless burthen seemed to be the characteristics of the actors in the scene.

From Pompey's Pillar to Cleopatra's Needles the transition is inevitable when one is in the course of sight-seeing. These latter interested me far more than the former, inasmuch as they are thoroughly Egyptian, having been brought to Alexandria from Heliopolis, where Mœris

(Thothmes the Third) had originally caused them to be erected before the temple of the Sun. They are of rose-coloured granite, thickly covered with hieroglyphics. One of them, which was given by Mohammed Ali to the English Government, is lying upon the ground, half-buried in sand, and its hieroglyphics nearly effaced. The other is still standing, and, although the mysterious characters upon two of its sides have been much injured by the action of the winds and of the sands, those upon the two remaining faces are as sharply fresh as though they had been chiselled yesterday. How does one regret, while gazing upon such monuments, one's inability to decypher the figurative language which records the epoch of, and the motives for, their foundation,—the names of their founders,—their earliest destination,—all which now remains as a sealed book to mankind, with the exception of those gifted few who have mastered that symbolical cypher, of which the key was discovered in the famous Rosetta stone!

The remaining antiquities of Alexandria are the Catacombs, the so-called Baths of Cleopatra, and Cæsar's Camp; but compared with those portions of Egypt which border the Nile, the capital of the Ptolemies is poor in monumental

remains. The creation of the Macedonian Conqueror, and the seat of government of the Greek Sovereigns of Egypt, the ancient splendour of Alexandria was of a mixed character, partaking less of the enduring and stupendous majesty peculiar to the constructions of the Pharaohs, than of the lighter and more harmonious style of architecture with which Grecian imagination and Grecian art replaced the gloomy edifices of old Egypt. The palaces and the temples of the Ptolemies, and of their Roman successors, were powerless to resist the aggression of the Arab conquerors of Egypt, and while the monuments of Thebes and Carnac survived the assaults of the Persian Cambyses, those of Alexandria disappeared before the victorious arms of the Caliph Omar's General, Amr. It indeed held out an obstinate siege of more than a year, owing to the difficulties presented to the besiegers by the canals of the Delta, but it succumbed at last to the Saracen, and of course fared the worse for its previous resistance. Some idea of the wealth and magnificence of ancient Alexandria may be formed from the accounts dispatched by Amr to the Caliph at Damascus, in which he stated that the conquered city contained 4000 palaces, 4000 baths, 400 theatres, 12,000 shops for the sale of food,

and 40,000 tributary Jews. The wealth was ordered to be reserved for the public use, but the intellectual stores contained in Alexandria were ruthlessly condemned to be destroyed; for, contrary to the wishes of Amr, the Caliph Omar commanded that the famous library should be burned, and the treasures of learning and philosophy which it contained, were, in consequence, devoted to the ignoble purpose of heating the baths of the city. "If it contains anything beyond the Koran, destroy it," was his barbarous mandate, "if it contains nothing but the Koran, it is useless."

At the death of the Caliph Omar, Othman, his successor, removed Amr from the government of Egypt, an event which induced the Greeks to attempt the recovery of Alexandria from the Saracens. They succeeded in once more obtaining mastery over it, but for a very short period; for Amr retook it in A.D. 646, and was reinstated as governor of the conquered province; since which time Egypt has remained in possession of the Moslems. Religious controversy amongst the rising sects of Christianity, by whom Alexandria had been converted into a hot-bed of theological disputes, led to great dissensions throughout Egypt, and very mate-

rially facilitated the success of the Saracens. The Copts, or descendants of the ancient Egyptians, loathed the Greek yoke to a degree that induced them to favour the approach of any people who were likely to rid them of it; and treachery and internal cabals opened the door of Christian Egypt, as it did of Christian Spain, to the invasion of the Infidels. What a wonderful people were those Saracens! for within one hundred years after the Hegira, (the flight of Mahomet from his native city, Mecca,) the arms of his followers had extended over Syria, Egypt, Persia, the Northern coast of Africa, and Spain.

But I must not digress. After riding through the interminable heaps of rubbish that mark the site of ancient Alexandria, we directed our course towards a spot about two miles distant from the town, interesting to all English travellers who visit Egypt,—the battle-ground where Abercromby fell in that memorable engagement which checked the progress of revolutionary France in the East, and saved our Indian possessions from the grasping policy of Napoleon Buonaparte. His master-mind did not indeed *originate* the idea of making Egypt a stepping-stone to vaster projects and greater conquests, but it turned its

energies to the execution of those conceptions which had previously occupied the attention of the great men of earlier ages; and where others had paused to calculate he rushed on to act.

Albuquerque had, more than three centuries before, perceived that a passage to India could be effected by means of the Nile and the Red Sea, which would materially interfere with the monopoly just acquired by the Portuguese in the newly discovered passage by the Cape of Good Hope. To obviate such an interference, and to preserve that monopoly for his country, he suggested the gigantic project of turning the course of the Nile into the Red Sea, so as to prevent the possibility of communication by that river.

The great and wise Leibnitz remonstrated with Louis the Fourteenth, when that monarch was about to invade Holland, telling him that it was hopeless to attack the Dutch in their own country, protected as they were by their canals and dykes; but that it was by *the occupation of Egypt* that he could injure them, as by that means he could successfully interfere with their Indian commerce.

And when Napoleon Buonaparte sailed for the shores of Egypt, his aim in conquering the land of the Pharaohs was not to deliver its people

from the misrule of the Porte, and the tyranny of the Memlooks, but to pursue that policy with respect to *our* commerce in the East, which Leibnitz had advocated should be pursued by Louis the Fourteenth towards Holland.

Under the direction of a ragged little Arab guide, we rode over the battle-field, and fancied we obtained a tolerably correct notion of the position of the contending forces, but we soon found out that he was making a lamentable confusion, between the seat of modern warfare, and the camp of Cæsar; for what he had very seriously pointed out to us as an English Fort, turned out to be one of the Roman outworks!

During our ride home we had an opportunity of judging of the efficient manner in which Mohammed Ali is fortifying Alexandria. The works are under the direction of a French engineer, but are executed by Egyptian workmen, or rather soldiers, (who, in this country, are always employed in public works.) They are most creditable both as to plan and execution; not to mention the rapidity with which they have been carried on, being in a very forward state, although they were only commenced in 1840.

Mohammed Ali is most energetic in his efforts to restore Alexandria to something like its an-

cient prosperity and consequence. Damietta and Rosetta have been sacrificed, to ensure its commercial supremacy, and the Viceroy has placed it on an equality with Cairo, the seat of government of the Caliphs, and of their Memlook successors; for, contrary to the custom of his predecessors, he resides during half of the year at Alexandria, and his palace here equals, if not surpasses, that of Cairo.

Mohammed Ali's palace faces the harbour, and commands a noble and animated view of the fine port and its shipping. The embellishments are in the French taste, and, together with the innumerable presents which have been sent to the Viceroy by the different sovereigns of Europe, and which occupy conspicuous positions in the various apartments, form a description of decoration the reverse of Oriental. One of the most remarkable of these is a splendid round table of Roman mosaic, representing the most interesting monuments of the Eternal City, which was sent by the Pope to the Pasha. French musical clocks, French crystal essence-bottles, and French china vases are in every room. Another proof of the adoption of European customs (and one in opposition to all Mahometan precedents, and even *articles of faith*, which prohibit

all imitations of the human countenance being produced in painting) consists in the portraits of three of the Viceroy's sons suspended in one of the saloons,—heavy, ordinary, unmeaning-looking youths, whose faces possess none of the energy and talent which is said to characterize that of their illustrious old father. But enough of the palace and its adornments.

The most beautiful, the most striking objects in the scenery of Alexandria are the date-palms, with their lofty elegant trunks, their graceful feathery foliage, and their enormous pendent clusters of fruit hanging in rich abundance beneath the verdant *panache* which forms the summit of this truly beautiful tree. They abound in and about Alexandria; and this being the season when the dates are ripe, we have seen them in full perfection, and have been enabled to judge of the great superiority of the fresh fruit over the dried ones, which are alone known in Europe. We have also for the first time tasted bananas here; but I fancy that it requires custom to make one relish this luscious fruit, as we all agreed that its flavour very much resembled what we suppose that of *pommade à la vanille* to be. In Signor Ghibarra's garden, which is a charming one, we saw a colossal description of lemon. The

tree is not larger than those I have seen in Spain and Italy, but the fruit is of the size of a pumpkin. Oranges are also in great abundance, and well-flavoured. In short, the fertility of the soil is all-apparent; and, if every part of Egypt is as fruitful as Alexandria, the whole country may be compared to one vast garden of Hesperides.

We passed the evening at the Sardinian Consul-General's, where we met such members of the Consular society of Alexandria as have not followed the Viceroy to Cairo, whither almost all the Consuls-General are used to accompany him in their diplomatic capacity. Two Oriental ladies in full costume came in to pay Madame Cerutti a visit; one of them a Syrian from Damascus, the other an Armenian from Constantinople. Their appearance and dress were very striking, both wearing the fashions of their native cities. Being Christians, they were unveiled, and felt no scruple in taking part in the *soirée* of our amiable hostess, where the male portion of the society predominated over the female. It was something new for us to see tea-trays handed about by barelegged Arab servants, with red slippers and large white turbans; and tea-cups held in fingers dyed with henna, and their contents sipped by lips that could syllable nothing but Arabic and Turkish.

Unfortunately for me, our two fair Orientals understood no European tongue, so that our intercourse was restricted to sundry courteous smiles and Eastern salutations. Madame Cerutti, however, who speaks Arabic fluently, told me that the Armenian lady expressed herself delighted at hearing that we are to proceed to Cairo by the same conveyance that is to take her and her husband there,—namely, No. 4 of the Pasha's steamers, which is to leave Alexandria to-morrow morning. What pleasure we are to derive from merely looking at each other I cannot understand. However, I was bound to reciprocate the civility; and with this compliment we took leave of our kind entertainers, and returned, lighted by an Arab *fenoos* (lantern), to our hotel.

I am devoting the last hours of the night to giving you this hasty transcript of our proceedings; for some days must necessarily elapse before I shall again have an opportunity of sending letters to Europe; and I am anxious to profit by this occasion to write a line to one or two other friends also, who will be anxious to hear of our advent here. But the waning lamp and my sleepy eyes warn me to conclude; therefore good night, and farewell until I reach Cairo.

CHAPTER III.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS.—TRAVELLING COMPANIONS.—CANAL BOAT.—THE NILE.—PYRAMIDS.—SUNSET ON THE NILE.—ARRIVAL AT CAIRO.—EGYPTIAN DONKEYS.—ASPECT OF CAIRO.—ORIENTAL COSTUME.—BAZAARS.—THE CITADEL.—VIEW OF CAIRO.—COURT OF THE MEMLOOKS.—RENCONTRE.—SELF-CONTROL.—VICE-REGAL ESCORT.

Cairo, Nov. 4, 1845.

THIS morning I awoke in a new world! The sun, the bright sunshine of Egypt, streamed in golden rays through the curtains of the vast projecting window of my bedchamber; strange, unwonted noises were heard in the street below, and roused me from a dream of home; I jumped out of bed, not quite sure of where I was, and, throwing open the casement, my eyes were greeted with such Oriental groupings as soon convinced me of my whereabouts, and rivetted me to the spot. Early as the hour was, the space before the hotel was already full of life, and movement, and noise (for nothing here is done quietly). Near the door were kneeling two camels laden with stones, and growling vehemently; notwithstanding the blows rained upon

them by their drivers, they would not get up—they had been overloaded, or badly loaded, and refused to rise until their burthens should be more equitably disposed of; and this, their firm determination, they conveyed to their task-masters by sounds and gestures not to be misunderstood. It was evident from the various intonations of the cries they uttered, beginning with a low plaintive grumble and ending in an angry growl, that they had commenced by pitying themselves for being overtasked, that they then remonstrated against the injustice of the blows that were inflicted upon them, and ended by angrily defying their tyrants to make them move! And they were right, the sagacious brutes! for the men, finding that violent measures availed them nothing in such a dispute, decided upon lightening their loads; and no sooner was that done than the camels arose and cheerfully stalked away, turning their patient heads from side to side, and meekly looking down with half-closed eyes upon their drivers, as though they had never been at issue with them. Here a group of old Arabs in huge white turbans, squatted under a wall, were waving their fly-flappers over the heaps of flat cakes of bread and ripe dates that were spread upon the ground before

them for sale. There stood a serpent-charmer, with a large living snake coiled twice round his neck, and a bag full of lively vipers in each hand offering his services to whoever wished their premises to be cleared of such unwelcome guests. In the centre of the place were gathered together twenty or thirty donkeys, all ready caparisoned for hire, with high-fronted saddles covered with red morocco and carpets spread over them, fit to carry gentleman or lady; and their noisy drivers standing by, vociferating among themselves as Arabs only can do, their dark slender limbs covered merely with a blue cotton shirt, the sleeves of which are gracefully drawn up with cords that cross the shoulders, their swarthy faces surmounted by a voluminous white turban, scarcely one among them possessing two eyes, such are the ravages of ophthalmia in this clime! And lo! immediately facing my window rises the tall minaret of a neighbouring mosque, and from its upper gallery sounded the deep-toned cry of the Muezzin calling the Faithful to prayer—sounds long unheard by me, yet well remembered, and bringing with them happy associations of my first wanderings in the East! And now rushed by a half-naked Arab, running at the top of his speed, and loudly cracking a long whip to

clear the way for the Caireen gentleman in silken robes, who followed upon a richly caparisoned steed, all covered with velvet, and gold, and tassels, his pipe-bearer riding close behind him. And hark! what shrieks and shouts are those that ever and anon rise above the noise and clamour of the scene below? The Moristan (or public madhouse) of Cairo is close by, and the frantic merriment and wild yells of its wretched inmates mingle in strange discordance with the busy hum of every-day life.

But hold—enough! I am again dabbling in description, although I have not yet told you how I got here. Not, alas! upon that enchanted carpet of the Arabian Tale, upon which its owner had only to seat himself and think of where he wished to be conveyed, and behold the wish was realized before it had been uttered, and in a second he found himself transported to the farthermost parts of the earth! *Our* flittings were less easy, yet they commenced under pleasant auspices, for we found that five of our agreeable fellow-passengers of L'Alexandre were to profit by the same conveyance as ourselves to get to Cairo on their way to far more distant destinations; two of them being bound for Ceylon, a third for Calcutta, and Mr. P., a worthy and

amiable member of the Society of Friends, with whom our acquaintance commenced at Malta, for Syria and the Holy Land; while the fifth, Monsieur de M——, a young French gentleman attached to the Ministère des Affaires Etrangères at Paris, is the bearer of the Grand Cordon of the Legion of Honour which Louis Philippe is sending to the Viceroy of Egypt, in acknowledgment of the attentions paid by his Highness to the Duke de Montpensier in his recent visit to this country.

Our voyage from Alexandria commenced at eight in the morning of the 2nd, our baggage being sent to the place of embarkation on camels, and we following in a sort of van driven by an Arab. Having, in compliance with the advice of experienced persons at Alexandria, decided upon going by one of the small Egyptian steamboats which ply between Atfé and Cairo, in preference to the more tedious mode of a sailing-vessel, we were embarked upon the Mahmoudieh canal, and towed along by a tiny steam-tug to Atfé, where we were transferred to No. 4 of the Pasha's steamers, to perform the Nile part of the navigation.

The passage from Alexandria to Atfé, which offers nothing to the eye but the high mud-

banks of the canal, takes about eleven or twelve hours to accomplish, consequently it was quite dark before we reached the atter place; and to describe the scene of noise and confusion which attended the shifting of the passengers and their luggage from one steamer to another, in the midst of screaming Arabs, all eager to become the guardians of your property for the time being, would be scarcely possible. The dark earnest faces surmounted by white turbans, the naked limbs, the wild gesticulations which accompanied the harsh guttural vociferations of the crowd who fluttered around us, all lighted up by the fitful flashings of a few lanterns, formed a strange picture, the local colouring of which lent it an interest which charmed us, as it were, into a sort of insensibility to the actual discomfort of the moment. Mohammed superintended the transfer of our numerous packages so carefully that nothing was lost; and after vainly endeavouring to catch a glimpse of the Nile, "the blessed river" of the Egyptians, we proceeded to stow ourselves away for the night in a very small cabin, containing nothing to repose upon but stuffed benches, and crowded with at least three times as many persons as it was intended to accommodate. One of these

individuals, an exceedingly fat Greek gentleman, who, we were told, is one of the wealthiest merchants in Egypt, contrived with happy egotism to appropriate to his own use the places of three persons, and stretching himself out at his ease, while he cast a satisfied look about him at the rueful faces of some among us who could not find even a place to sit down, he exclaimed with a long aspiration, "Ah—h! maintenant je suis bien—je suis parfaitement bien!" Having established that point to his perfect satisfaction, he presently looked about him with a benign expression, and addressing himself more especially to the ladies present, he added, "Mais mettez-vous donc à vos aises!" and then burying himself between two large pillows, he soon gave audible proofs of having been quickly transported to the Land of Nod.

As to putting ourselves at our ease, that was out of the question; very uneasily indeed passed the night; and the first streak of dawn, for which I had been eagerly watching, brought me to the deck, where seating myself upon a trunk, I saw the sun rise over the broad and turbid waters of the Nile.

The Nile! now, then, for the first time I felt that I was in the land of Egypt; and oh! what

a crowd of glorious associations rushed bewilderingly across my mind as I gazed upon the dark waves of that noble river rolling calmly onwards to the sea, unchanged and unchanging amidst the strange vicissitudes that had befallen the valley it fertilizes! Thus had it flowed in the days when the Pharaohs ruled gloriously amidst the palaces of Thebes and Memphis, and when the realm of Egypt was the greatest among the nations of the earth; and even thus, when she became successively the prey of the Ethiopian, the Persian, the Macedonian, the Roman, the Saracen, and the Turkish conqueror! And upon those discoloured waters had the eyes of Thothmes, and Sesostris, and Cambyses, and Alexander, and Cleopatra, and Julius Cæsar, and Omar, and Saladin, and Selim rested complacently as upon the richest jewel of their diadems! And still it flowed on, calm and undisturbed, while degeneration slowly crept along its shores, and, one by one, its great lights had become extinguished, and at last "darkness had overshadowed the land;" and the prophecy of Ezekiel had been fulfilled to the very letter, and from the first it had become the last among nations, because of the wickedness of its rulers. "It shall be the basest of kingdoms, neither shall it exalt

itself any more among the nations, for I will diminish them, that they shall no more rule over the nations. Her power shall come down—I will sell the land into the hand of the wicked—I will make the land waste, and all that is therein, by the hand of strangers. I the Lord have spoken it."

While these shadows of the past were flitting across my mind, my eyes wandered over the actualities of the scene, and beheld flat and monotonous banks, diversified only by occasional groves of the graceful date-palm, a Sheikh's tomb here and there, and a few miserable mud-villages. But strings of loaded camels, herds of buffaloes, and troops of half-naked Fellahs raising water to irrigate their fields in the same primitive manner that was in use among the patriarchs, gave an Eastern stamp to the landscape, such as a painter would have loved to delineate.

About dinner-time a distant view was obtained of the great pyramids of Ghizeh, dim and shadowy as the histories that cling to their original destination! Are those mysterious structures monuments of the pride or the piety of their founders? were they meant to be temples or tombs? This is a question that has hitherto baffled the science and research of all nations, and therefore it would

be worse than presumptuous in one so ignorant as myself to breathe a conjecture upon the subject. Description had rendered us so familiar with the form of those gigantic monuments, that we gazed upon them as we would have done upon the face of a friend long parted from but not forgotten, and with an emotion which I should vainly endeavour to reduce into words—an eager longing, tempered with mysterious awe, to stand beneath their vast shadows and penetrate into their desolate chambers. Nothing that I have ever seen in any land equalled the sunset of that evening, and nothing that was ever written could so well apply to it as Byron's exquisite lines:

"All its hues,
From the rich sunset to the rising star,
Their magical variety diffuse:
And now they change; a paler shadow strews
Its mantle o'er the mountains; parting day
Dies like the dolphin, whom each pang imbues
With a new colour as it gasps away,
The last still loveliest, till—'tis gone—and all is gray!"

Our only regret was that darkness had set in ere we reached Boulac (which is the Port of Cairo), and nothing could be distinguished by us of the City of the Caliphs. Something of the same scene of confusion which had characterized our landing at Atfé again took place at Boulac,

but we were soon seated in the excellent *char-à-banc* belonging to Shepheard's English Hotel, driven by Mr. Shepheard himself; and preceded by a running Fellah cracking a long whip to clear the way, and another carrying over his shoulder a long pole, upon the summit of which was affixed an iron cresset filled with blazing wood, called a *Meshaleh* (a magnificent description of link, and an indispensable night accompaniment in a city where street lamps are unknown); we were driven over very rough ground from Boulac to Cairo, and safely deposited in Shepheard's Hotel.

A clean bed, an airy room, a tranquil night—no musquitoes—none of the "plagues of Egypt" to murder sleep—prepared me to enjoy without drawback my first day in Cairo. I have already told you what were my waking impressions; and, as you may judge, they were of a nature to render me impatient to commence my perambulations in this, to me, *terra incognita.* Mohammed had put on his Egyptian dress, sabre and all, of which he is not a little proud, being, like all Orientals, very susceptible to the adornment of the outward man, and the respect which it commands among the lower classes. He had procured donkeys for our party (a large one, consist-

ing of nine persons); and each of us attended by a donkey driver armed with a stick, which he uses right and left, not only to urge on his charge, but to ward off the too close approximation of the populace, with whom a near contact never fails to entail *piquants souvenirs*, and preceded by Mohammed, who cleared the way with his *courbash* (a whip made of Hippopotamus hide), our cavalcade set out upon a first expedition through the streets of Cairo.

The delight of riding upon an Egyptian ass is not to be described, and you must not imagine that its paces resemble in any manner those of European donkeys; the Egyptian animal is as sprightly and vivacious as the European is dull and sluggish, and its elastic ambling equals, if not surpasses, the cantering of the best trained horse. Everybody here, with the exception of the Turkish dignitaries, rides upon donkeys, and the manner in which they thread their way at full speed through the narrow streets of Cairo, which are encumbered with loaded camels, water-carriers, and a throng of foot-passengers such as I never encountered in any other place, is quite marvellous. At first I proceeded in fear and trembling, fully expecting at every corner to be thrown off and trampled upon by some huge

camel; but, by dint of cries and blows, my ragged henchman kept me so free from harm, that I soon lost all apprehension, and was enabled to give my undivided attention to the novel scenes that surrounded me, instead of allowing it to be absorbed by my individual safety.

The interior aspect of Cairo is far more striking and original than that of Constantinople; it is purely an Arab city — the city of Haroun-al-Raschid and of Salah-e'-deen, of Zobeide and of Amine, and, *par excellence*, of the one-eyed Calendars. The houses are most picturesque in their construction, with large prominent windows of wooden lattice-work elegantly carved, the upper stories projecting over the lower ones so as almost to exclude sunshine from the narrow streets, in many of which the opposite houses nearly touch each other. Mosques and public fountains are numerous and beautiful; the shops are, like those of Constantinople, small, and presenting no outward show of merchandize; the owner sits crosslegged upon a carpet spread over his shop-board, which contains just space enough to accommodate one customer upon the cushion that occupies the other end. But the population of Cairo is the most striking feature of the place; for it has preserved its Oriental aspect both in

men and things, free from those innovations which in the Turkish dominions have introduced the prose of European civilization into the wild and picturesque poetry of Eastern barbarism. None of the Frank mixture which neutralizes the nationality of Stamboul is here to be seen—none of the *hybrid* Nizam uniform adopted by the modern Turk! Here the turban flourishes in its pristine volume and integrity—the flowing Caireen robes of silk, or the elegant Memlook dress of cloth richly braided, imparts a certain grace and grandeur to their wearers; the dark face of the Copt looks more sombre surmounted by his black turban; the wild eyes of the Mecca Arab flash brightly beneath the voluminous folds of snowy muslin that wreath his handsome head; the Mograbbyn moves majestically along, wrapped in his white Burnous; and the Egyptian lady, mounted upon her " high ass," preceded by a black eunuch, and enveloped from head to foot in a vast wrapping mantle of black silk, which leaves nothing visible but her dark, elongated eyes peering forth from a white face-veil, looks like nothing one has ever before seen in Paynim land or Christendom.

The bazaars, as in all Eastern cities, are divided into covered streets, each devoted to a distinct

branch of trade, and each closed at night by a chain and wooden doors, which are guarded by a watchman. As far as I can judge from one day's ride through the Bezesteens of Cairo, they are immeasurably inferior to those of Constantinople; even the Turkish bazaar there is a poor affair, and one vainly seeks for any of those gaudy trifles which render a shopping expedition in the City of the Sultan so agreeable a lounge. And this is the more to be wondered at, as everything in the way of dress and ornament for the hareems of the wealthy Caireens is brought to this country from Constantinople, and the Egyptian women are said to be extremely fond of finery, especially jewellery. But the noise, the bustle, the jostling of the streets of Cairo, who shall attempt to describe? With the recollection of the taciturn Turks, so full of decent dignity, vividly before me, and the impression that all Oriental populations must be grave and quiet like that of Constantinople, I was not prepared for the scene of confusion presented by the interior of Cairo, where everybody screams, and gesticulates, and pushes right and left to make good their own way among the dromedaries, camels, horses, and asses, which incessantly circulate through those narrow causeways. Then, the itinerant venders

of all sorts of eatables are innumerable, and their cries add to the Babel-like clamour that almost deafens and bewilders one. To add to our confusion this morning, one of our donkey-men had evidently been indulging in *Hash'hish;* and its exhilarating effects had so maddened him with merriment, that his songs and shouts of laughter attracted a crowd after us, whose enjoyment of his wild jokes was to the full as noisy as himself.

Our first visit was to the citadel, where the renowned Sultan Saladin (whose name is familiar to every English child, as the opponent of Richard Cœur de Lion, in his crusade to the Holy Land,) once held his court. The remains of his palace, now consisting only of some fine fragments of antique granite columns, probably brought from Memphis or Heliopolis, and known by the name of "Joseph's Hall," are still to be seen; and I noticed amongst the rubbish some shattered granite blocks covered with hieroglyphics, which proves that the antique monuments of the Pharaohs and the Ptolemies had been rifled to furnish materials for the construction of the Sultan's palace. Another memorial of Saladin is Joseph's Well, likewise in the citadel, and by some travellers erro-

neously supposed to have been named after the patriarch, but in reality so called after the illustrious Saracen whose creation it was, and whose name was *Yussuf* (Joseph) *Salah-e'-deen*. From the ruins of Saladin's palace we were conducted to that of the Viceroy, which is comprised within the citadel walls, and to which we were without difficulty admitted, although his Highness was hourly expected to arrive there from his country residence at Shoubra. The disposition of Mohammed Ali's rooms is quite Turkish, except in the almost Parisian profusion of large mirrors that adorn them, and the number of small and ill-proportioned chandeliers that are suspended in the various apartments. The divans and hangings are splendid, and of the finest brocaded damask silks; the corners of the sofas reserved exclusively for his Highness are covered with a square piece of gold stuff fringed with gold, and furnished with three additional cushions of gold cloth; and here were placed, in readiness for him, his pocket-handkerchief, embroidered in gold, enclosed in a silk brocade bag, a small velvet case containing the comb with which he combs his beard, a Turkish mirror mounted in velvet and gold, a Koran and another Arabic volume, together with a fly-flapper of ostrich

feathers, and a bottle of Eau de Cologne. The Pasha's bath was heating for him, (the temperature, for I peeped in, nearly suffocating), and in an adjacent chamber, exquisitely fitted up as a dressing-room, were displayed the gold embroidered towels, and a sort of apron of crimson and gold, to be used by him on leaving the bath. This little peep into the habits of the *man* amused me more than a view of the magnificence of the *prince;* but that which delighted me above all is the view from these royal apartments, which, in truth, constitutes their greatest beauty. The windows look into a lovely garden, luxuriant with African vegetation; and far below the height occupied by the citadel lies the city of Cairo, with its intricate streets, its elegant Arabian architecture, its innumerable domes and light minarets, covering a vast extent of territory. And beyond the gates appears a second city—a city of the dead—embellished, too, with mosques and towers, beneath whose domes moulder the remains of the Memlook Sultans and the Circassian kings of Egypt—a race long since swept away!—while beyond flows the broad Nile, and, stretching away as far as the eye can reach, the great Libyian desert bounds the scene with its mag-

nificent Pyramids looming largely upon the transparent atmosphere; the whole lighted up by those richly glowing tints peculiar to Eastern skies, and which every artist must despair of imitating until he can dip his pencil in sunbeams.

Contiguous to the palace is the Court of Justice, presided over by the Governor of Cairo. As we passed through it we saw everything in preparation for the approaching hour of business, the scribes awaiting the coming of their chiefs, the prisoners guarded by soldiers, and the dreadful bastinado apparatus lying upon a square mat, in readiness to execute the sentences that are there daily passed for minor offences. As the day was drawing to a close, we hurried through the magnificent mosque now building by order of Mohammed Ali, close to the site of Saladin's palace, and could only notice its noble outline and costly materials (Egyptian alabaster), and the commanding position it occupies, which will render it, when completed, one of the most striking features in Cairo; but its details were lost upon us. The last object to which our attention was directed in the citadel, and perhaps the most interesting spot in it, was the court where the Memlooks were massacred by

order of Mohammed Ali in 1811; a daring *coup de politique,* which probably secured his power and saved his life, and which his admirers qualify as a *necessity,* instead of stigmatizing as a *cruelty.* The spot where the sole survivor of that bloody tragedy, Amyn Bey, spurred on his good steed to take the fearful leap which cleared the rampart, and miraculously saved his life, was pointed out to us, and we shuddered as we looked down the dizzy height which despair had hurried him on to attempt, and to attempt unharmed, although the gallant horse perished in the fall.

As we were returning to the hotel by the Mooski, one of the few streets of Cairo through which an European equipage can conveniently pass, we made a *rencontre* which brought to our recollection the old French proverb of "Parlez du soleil et l'on en voit les rayons." With the palace and the prowess of Mohammed Ali still upon our tongues, we actually stumbled upon the great man himself, upon his way to the citadel. We were riding *en file* through a very crowded thoroughfare, Mr. P. immediately preceding me, when to my dismay I beheld a man, brandishing a long courbash, rush through the throng, and inflict a violent blow upon our

unoffending friend, followed by a second one applied to his equally unoffending donkey. The first impulse of Mr. P. was to raise his whip and return the blow; but the influence of those conscientious scruples which forbid to the members of his religious persuasion all violent measures, or the indulgence of angry recrimination, quickly resumed its empire over his well-regulated mind, and his hand fell without having visited the outrage he had received upon its author, although I could see, from the flush on his cheek and the sparkle in his eye, that the triumph of principle over passion had not been achieved without an inward struggle. All this had passed so rapidly that no time had been left us even to conjecture its meaning; but I believe that I too was coming in for my share of the assault and battery dealt around by this apparent maniac, when Mohammed, rushing towards me, seized the bridle of my donkey, and suddenly backing it into a corner, explained the whole affair by exclaiming, "MOHAMMED ALI!" Back fell the crowd; all the gentlemen of our party immediately dismounted and uncovered, (with the exception of our friend, whose peculiar tenets again prescribed that he should pursue another course,) and onward gal-

loped two men on horseback, followed by an escort mounted on dromedaries, the foremost of whom bore the Viceroy's-prayer carpet; then came the Viceroy, seated alone in an European *calèche*, drawn by four fine greys, his coachman and two footmen dressed in scarlet-and-gold Memlook habits; and the *cortège* was closed by another escort upon dromedaries, carrying the Pasha's *chibouques*, enclosed in crimson-and-gold cases, with their accompanying apparatus of large silver censers for containing fire. The speed with which his Highness was driven compelled the dromedaries to proceed at a long trot, a pace which produces the most ludicrous effect in those uncouth-looking animals; nevertheless we could not but agree that they looked thoroughly in keeping with the *cortège* of an African potentate. Mohammed Ali graciously returned the salutations of our party,—and we galloped home to dinner highly gratified with having obtained this passing glimpse of the Lion of the East.

And now good night!

CHAPTER IV.

THE MEMLOOKS.—MASSACRE OF THE MEMLOOKS.—AMYN BEY.—THE LAST MEMLOOK.—MOSQUE OF SULTAN HASSAN.—GAMA TAYLOON.—MOSQUE OF AMR.

Cairo, Nov. 7, 1845.

In my last letter, I told you that we had seen the spot where the Memlooks were massacred in 1811. That visit rendered me so anxious to become acquainted with the particulars of the bloody deed, as well as with the circumstances which led to the necessity of exterminating the Memlooks root and branch, that I never rested until I had gathered from authentic sources here that which appears to me to be a true and dispassionate account of the affair. As the political importance of the Memlooks in Egypt, and their subsequent fall, involves some inevitable allusions to their origin as a body, I shall make no apology for giving you a slight preliminary sketch of their history, which will at the same time afford you a little insight into the crooked ways of Eastern politics.

One of the descendants of Salah-e'-deen, not relying upon the fidelity of his Egyptian subjects, and wishing to secure a force entirely devoted to himself, purchased twelve thousand Circassian and Mingrelian slaves, and formed them into a guard, upon which was bestowed the denomination of Memlooks. But these strangers soon perceived their power, and reversed the authority that had conferred importance upon them; they recruited their own force from the same source from which they themselves had been drawn, and having no patriotic interest in Egypt—in short being merely mercenaries—they thought only of enriching themselves by rapine, plunder, and extortion. This system continued during the dynasties of the Aglobites and Baharides, and finally, about the end of the fourteenth century, they became sovereigns of the country under the title of the Memlook Sultans. When Egypt was conquered in the sixteenth century by the Porte, of which it became the tributary, the Turkish Sultan, Selim the First, found that owing to the great distance which separates the vanquished territory from the seat of government, it would be impossible—at least impolitic—to divest the Memlooks entirely of their power: probably, too, he counted upon their allegiance as a check upon

the Egyptian people. He therefore entrusted to twenty-four Memlook Beys a local administration, subject to the superior authority of a Turkish Viceroy, or Pasha; but in fact those Beys exercised the government of the country, and scrupled not to dismiss the Sultan's representative whenever it pleased them so to do. And thus matters went on until the latter end of the eighteenth century, when the authority of the Porte became wholly illusory. The famous Ali Bey refused to pay the tribute, expelled the Pasha, and coined money in his own name, routed all the Turkish forces sent against him, and proclaimed himself Memlook Sultan of Egypt, and Conqueror of the Two Seas.

But this revolt was subsequently put a stop to by the treachery of one of his own creatures; and Ali Bey, forced to fly, was proclaimed an outlaw. Such, however, was his influence in Egypt, that his partizans there finally effected his recall, and replaced him in the virtual sovereignty of the country. His successors although they recognized the authority of the Porte, wholly disregarded its orders; while, on the other hand, the Turkish government, feeling its power subverted, resorted to those means which generally form the policy of the weak, and mere-

ly attempted to maintain itself by exciting dissensions among the Memlooks. Such was the state of affairs at the period of the French invasion of Egypt by Buonaparte, who skilfully seized upon the oppressions exercised over the Egyptian people by their two Memlook rulers, Mourad Bey and Ibrahim Bey (between whom the supreme power was divided), as a pretext to establish himself among them as the redressor of their wrongs; while towards the Turkish government he assumed the character of champion of the insulted rights of the Porte.

The gallant resistance made by the Memlooks to that invasion, their severe losses, in short the whole details of the Egyptian occupation by the French army, are so well known that I need not here dwell upon them. Although routed, the Memlooks were not destroyed, and a sufficient number of them still remained to render the government of Egypt an irksome task to whatever ruler should attempt to resist their pretensions.

At last, however, they found a match for themselves in Mohammed Ali, who was not the man to yield to any such assumptions, even when founded upon old uses and abuses; or to relinquish one iota of the power that was vested in

him as Pasha of Egypt. The lawless aggressions of the Memlooks, and their system of levying contributions in different parts of the country, were therefore steadily opposed by him, and they in consequence looked upon him as an usurper and intruder, whom it would be expedient to get rid of as soon as possible. A petty warfare was kept up between this turbulent body and the Pasha's Albanian troops for a considerable time, without any other result than that of diminishing the Memlook force, which had no means of repairing and recruiting its numbers in a country where they were now considered in the light of a common enemy. As, however, they were still strong enough to be formidable, and as it was advisable to put an end to the harassing system of warfare that prevailed, Mohammed Ali sent an army against them, under the command of his eldest son, Ibrahim Bey (the present Ibrahim Pasha), who succeeded in driving them up the country into Nubia and Dongola, where, no other alternative being left to them, they established themselves for a time. Still, although the great body of the Memlooks were thus expelled from Egypt, a considerable number of them remained scattered about in various parts of the country, where they had been established previously to the

accession of Mohammed Ali to power; and to these the Pasha considered it politic to extend an amnesty, and the promise of protection to all who should repair to Cairo and remain quietly there. The remnant of the Memlooks having profited by this indulgence, became located in the capital, and gave in their allegiance to the new ruler, which, however, subsequently proved to be only a semblance of submission.

Some time afterwards an expedition against the Wahabees was organized by Mohammed Ali, and the command confided to his favourite son, Toussoon Pasha; but, upon the eve of its departure, it was discovered that the Memlooks had formed a plot for the subversion of the Pasha's government, and that they only waited for the departure of the army to put their plans into execution, and to throw everything into confusion. Mohammed Ali, aware of all that was passing, opposed to this deep-laid design a depth of prudence and a power of dissembling which his adversaries did not give him credit for. Apprized of their treachery, yet acting in such a manner as to lull suspicion, he, with prompt decision, made up his mind to the necessity of striking such a blow as should at once and for ever crush the factious body which insidiously

sought his destruction. That he was warranted in seeking to exterminate the power of the Memlooks cannot be denied, but most certainly the means adopted by him to carry out his views argue a cruelty of purpose, and a depth of hypocrisy, characteristic of an Eastern despot, but revolting to our more humane ideas of policy.

He proposed to the Memlooks through their chief, Saim Bey, to take part in the expedition against the Wahabees (which had received the designation of the Holy War, as its assigned motive was to redeem Mecca and Medina from the insolent encroachments of those fanatics), and invited every individual of their body then living in Cairo to attend his audience in the citadel, on Friday, the 1st of March, 1811, in order to receive their nomination to the different posts they were to occupy in the army destined to combat the Wahabees. The Memlooks fell unsuspiciously into the trap laid for them, and repaired in a body, amounting to 470 men, on the appointed day to the citadel. The Pasha's measures had been taken in such a manner as to secure the complete success of his *coup de main;* only one person had been admitted into his confidence, and that person was one on whom he could rely as upon himself; the garrison of

the citadel remained under arms, and orders had been given that the gates should be closed as soon as the Memlooks had passed through them.

Mohammed Ali received his victims with the utmost affability, conversing cheerfully with their chiefs, between whom and himself many civilities passed on the subject of the alleged motive for their interview; and at last coffee was brought to them, followed by pipes, the closing ceremony of an Eastern audience. At that juncture, Mohammed Ali quitted the divan, and sending for the captain of his guard, communicated to him his private orders, which were immediately conveyed to the troops within the walls for their government in the approaching crisis. The Memlooks, having been told that the Pasha had withdrawn to his hareem, comprehended that it was time for them to depart; and consequently they repaired to the court of the citadel, where they were in the act of mounting their horses, when a murderous volley, fired on them from every side, stretched many of them lifeless upon the ground. Thus taken by surprise, their first impulse was to dash onward towards the gates, and endeavour to effect their escape—but in vain! The gates had been barricaded from without; the firing continued to pour unmerci-

fully upon them; penned in between four walls, they had no means of defending themselves against their assailants; no chance of salvation remained to these devoted men! Then followed a scene of horror to which no pen can do justice, and which the imagination shrinks from picturing to itself. The shrieks of the wounded, the groans of the dying, the despairing yells of those who, still unhurt, wildly urged their maddened horses round and round the court in the vain hope of finding some issue from the scene of carnage, mingled in horrible confusion with the clashing of sabres vainly drawn, the clatter of hoofs, and the measured report of pistols and musketry, every shot of which told with dreadful precision, and brought to the ground horse and rider in bloody heaps. It was in that awful crisis that Amyn Bey, one of the Memlook chiefs, preferring death in any shape, inflicted by himself, to the cold-blooded butchery that was carrying on around him, forced his horse up on the parapet of the citadel wall, from whence he spurred him on to take that fearful leap which has conferred such celebrity upon his name, and upon the spot. The height from which he thus madly precipitated himself was between thirty and forty feet from the ground, but it was not a moment

to calculate either distance or consequences; at the foot of the wall were some heaps of rubbish upon which Amyn Bey and his devoted steed alighted — the horse was dead—the Memlook rose unhurt!

And now where was he to save himself, and what roof would shelter his proscribed head? An Albanian camp was close by, and into the nearest tent rushed Amyn Bey, and cast himself upon the generosity of its occupant, an Albanian officer, who, touched by the melancholy plight of the fugitive, nobly afforded him an asylum at the risk of his own life. For many days the Memlook remained concealed in the Albanian's tent, but the Pasha having at last heard of Amyn's extraordinary exploit and escape, gave orders that he should immediately be delivered up to him; Amyn Bey's protector, however, instead of obeying that stern mandate, provided him with a horse, and generously contrived to effect his escape into Asia, where he was beyond the power of his persecutor.

It is said that after the lapse of a few years, the Pasha of Egypt settled a pension upon the sole survivor of the fatal first of March, and invited him to return to Cairo, with the assurance of favour and protection being extended to

him to the end of his life. But, as you may imagine, the recollection of Mohammed Ali's memorable hospitality to his brethren in arms, was not of a nature to inspire Amyn Bey with much confidence in the promises of a man who had treacherously converted the sacred character of a host into the odious office of a destroyer. He therefore declined the Pasha's offer, and, preferring a life of exile to the terrible chances involved in a return to Egypt, the last Memlook set up his household gods at Acre, where, under the protection of the Turkish governor, he terminated his existence at a good old age within the last three or four years.

The mosques of Cairo are very numerous, and their minarets form one of the most beautiful features in the place, being infinitely more graceful in their form than those of Constantinople. Many of them are ornamented with three tiers of galleries and light sculptures *à jour* in the style of the Damascus architecture, which is considered to afford the best specimens of Saracenic art, and is the school from whence the Moors of Spain derived those beautiful ideas which are so exquisitely illustrated in the halls of the Alhambra; whence the two styles, the *Stalactite* and the *Honeycomb* vie with each other in richness and

airy grace. As no objection is made to Christians entering any of the mosques of Cairo, save two (El Azher, and El Hassenyn, to which no person not professing the Mahometan religion, or at least wearing the Mahometan dress, can be admitted), and no Firman is required for that purpose, as in Constantinople, we have been making a round of the religious structures, in the course of our morning rides. Of these the first to be specified is the mosque of Sultan Hassan, as it is considered the most beautiful specimen of Arabian architecture in Cairo ; in short, the most perfect religious structure in the country. It was built in the fourteenth century, and the blocks used in its construction were brought from the Pyramids, which have also afforded materials for many other of the public buildings of Cairo ; the Egyptian Caliphs having had as few scruples as the Roman Pontiffs in rifling and defacing the precious monuments of antiquity within their reach, in their zeal to leave behind them substantial proofs of their own piety and magnificence. The harmonious outlines of Sultan Hassan's mosque, the symmetry of its proportions, the beauty of its arches, and the richness of the stalactite ornaments of its roof, recall to mind the Moorish structures of Seville and Granada,

and justify the preeminence which is ascribed to it over the other mosques of Cairo.

The stains of Sultan Hassan's blood, murdered within the sanctuary by his Memlooks, are shown upon the beautifully tesselated marble pavement; his tomb occupies the centre of the interior enclosure, and on the head of it is laid the largest and most splendid copy of the Koran that I have yet seen, magnificently illuminated, like the Christian missals of the same epoch, in gold and colours. But the embroidered covering over the Sultan's tomb is faded and moth-eaten, the pavement is broken and degraded in many places, and here, as everywhere else in Cairo, a melancholy air of neglect and decay is visible, which makes one long to organize a wholesale system of restoration and purification, and to send forth throughout the city masons, and painters, and glaziers, to rescue from perdition so much that is worthy of being preserved, but which, if things remain in the state they now are, must inevitably perish ere long.

Still more melancholy is the picture of desolation exhibited at the mosque of the Caliph Ahmed-ebn-e'-Tayloon, called by the Caireens Gama Tayloon, a structure which ought to be an object of veneration to them, as it was the first

mosque erected on the site of Cairo, having been founded A. D. 879, just ninety years before any other part of the city was commenced. It is said to have been built upon the model of the Caaba at Mecca, and is remarkable for its fine pointed arches, double rows of which still remain standing, although ruin has laid its hand upon some of them, and menaces the whole. These pointed arches, and the date of their construction, go far to decide the question of the Saracens having been the inventors of that style of architecture; and the reasoning of Sir Gardiner Wilkinson strikes me to be conclusive on this subject; for, as he observes, that the pointed arch was not known in Europe until three centuries later, it is most probable that it was then introduced by the Crusaders, who borrowed the idea from the Saracenic structures they had seen in the East. The exterior minaret of the Tayloon mosque affords from its gallery the finest panoramic view of Cairo, superior even to that from the citadel, as it includes the citadel itself, which forms a noble feature in the scene. The ascent to the gallery is by an *exterior* spiral staircase (an exception to the general rule of minaret architecture, which places the staircase in the interior), but in so ruinous a state that I found it a service

of danger to pick my way upwards amongst the loose perpendicular steps, and had not courage to accompany my companions to the upper gallery. However, from the second one I saw enough to enchant me in the view below, and had also an opportunity of hearing from our *cicerone*, as I rested myself upon the crumbling staircase, the reason of its having been, as it were, *turned inside out*—and here is the story, although, mark me, I do not vouch for the truth of it.

One day, during the period that the mosque was building under the directions of the Caliph Ahmed-ebn-e'-Tayloon, his Vizier, who, it would appear, was privileged to utter plain truths to his royal master, found him twirling a narrow slip of parchment round his finger, and remonstrated with him upon the folly of wasting his time in so puerile a manner, instead of devoting it to public affairs. The Caliph, stung by the reproach, and desirous at all hazards of rescuing himself from the mortifying inference which the Vizier's words carried with them, replied promptly, that, although his employment indeed wore the semblance of thoughtless idleness, it was not wholly without use or meaning, as he was deliberating within himself whether the chief minaret of the mosque then building should be distinguished by

a staircase winding externally round it, in the precise manner that the slip of parchment he then held, wound round his finger. The Vizier was silenced, and the Caliph to make good his assertion, ordered the minaret to be constructed as I have described.

One or two traditions of a far more ancient date are connected with the site which Gama Tayloon occupies, and you shall judge how far they are worthy of belief. The hill upon which the mosque stands, is called Kalat-el-Kebsh, which means in Arabic, the *Citadel of the Ram*, in commemoration of its being the spot where Abraham sacrificed the ram instead of his son *Ishmael*, whom the Arabs assert to have been the child that the patriarch was about to immolate, *and not Isaac*. The other tradition varies still more widely from our Biblical records, inasmuch, as that it pretends that the Ark of Noah is said to have rested on a certain spot now enclosed within one of the courts of the mosque, which received the name of Gebel Oskoor, in consequence of the thanksgiving Noah there offered to Heaven, for his rescue from the Deluge.

Although Gama Tayloon is the oldest mosque in modern Cairo, there is a still more ancient one in old Cairo,—the first Mahometan place of wor-

ship ever erected in Egypt, having been built there by Amr, the Saracen conqueror of the country, and general of the forces of Omar, the Ommayide Caliph, in whose reign Egypt became subjugated by the descendants of the Prophet. It is called the Mosque of Amr, and is built upon the site of the ancient Egyptian Babylon,— the spot where the Saracen army was encamped, and where, subsequently, Amr founded a city, which was originally called Fostát, and became the first capital of Moslem Egypt. Four centuries later, the present city of Cairo was built by the first of the Fatimite Caliphs, who established there the seat of government, and named it Masr-el-Kahira, or *the City of Victory*, (the name still given to it by the Egyptians, and which Europeans have turned into *Cairo)*; the town built by Amr then became Masr-el-Ateekeh, or, *Old Cairo*, to distinguish it from the new creation, and as such it has been known ever since. It has degenerated into a wretched Arab village, and now forms one of the miserable suburbs of the present capital.

To return, however, to the mosque of Amr, which, as I have already told you, was the first Mahometan temple founded in Egypt. Contrary to the usual custom here, where public and

private edifices are allowed to fall uncared for to decay, this mosque enjoys the privilege of occasional repairs, being shielded from destruction upon the strength of a popular superstition, which attributes to some unearthly revelation the announcement, that whenever the mosque of Amr should fall into ruins, the Moslem religion would fall with it. And we actually found it under repair, and full of workmen, all at the Viceroy's expense, who has been roused out of his usual apathy about such matters, I suppose, by a determination that the prophecy should not be realized during his own lifetime at least.

I was much interested in observing the amazing step that had been made in Arab architecture, between the building of the mosque of Amr, (which, as I have already told you, was the *first* Mahometan place of worship that was built in Egypt, and constructed within the first hundred years of the Hegira,) and the mosque of Tayloon, which was the *second* constructed here, and dates about 400 years later. The first, simple, almost rude, in its architecture, denotes the work of a people still in the infancy of the arts; while the latter exhibits all the noble and airy elegance of plan, and the careful finish of

execution, that characterize the monuments of a race gifted with an intuitive perception of the beautiful, and already far advanced in civilization; and bears that peculiar stamp of *developed* Arabian art, which pervades all the public monuments of Cairo, and renders it at once the most striking and the most beautiful of all the cities of the East.

The mosque of Amr contains nothing of remarkable interest except some fine pillars, to two of which miraculous powers have been attributed. They are placed so close together that it is difficult for any but a very slender person to pass between them, and the popular belief here is, that the test of a man being a true believer, consists in the possibility of his passing through the narrow opening, and that no infidel could ever accomplish such a feat! Well, our *cicerone*, after gravely assuring us of this fact, proceeded to illustrate it by passing in person between the columns; when, lo, and behold! being rather in good case, he stuck fast between them, and no efforts of his own or of ours could drag him through. He returned again and again to the charge, but all in vain,—the columns were inexorably stiff-backed, and were not to be propitiated into the least degree of elasticity in

his favour. It was evident that they rejected him as an unbeliever, and the poor fellow, after having held in his breath, and squeezed himself nearly into extinction in his strenuous endeavours to assert his faith, was obliged to consent to be drawn back again, quite crest-fallen. An English gentleman who accompanied us, and who has resided many years in Egypt, very gravely condoled with him upon the fact of his having been discovered through the unerring test to be a *Kafir*, (an infidel,) and then proceeded to take his place; when, to the indescribable consternation of the Moslem, the Christian passed between the pillars without an effort. This was the unkindest cut of all on the part of the contrary columns,—it was "straining at a gnat, and swallowing a camel;"—the man walked away in silence from the scene of his humiliation, but as he rode before us we heard him muttering to himself the whole way home; and I have no doubt, from the expression of his countenance, when he lifted me from my donkey at the Hotel door, that *chemin faisant* he had arrived at the consoling conclusion, that the famous orthodox columns of Amr's mosque, are the most arrant pair of humbugs in the Viceroy's dominions.—Adieu!

CHAPTER V.

CAIRO.—CAIRO MISSION.—CLIMATE.—PLAGUES OF EGYPT.—PROJECTED MARRIAGE.—MOHAMMED BEY DEFTERDAR.—BRIDAL PALACE.—WEDDING PROCESSIONS.—TOMBS OF THE MEMLOOK KINGS.—EL KAITBEY.—THE VICEROY'S TOMB.—OVERLAND MAILS.—AFFECTING EVENT.—THE GOOD SAMARITAN.—RAILROAD TO SUEZ.—DR. ABBOTT'S MUSEUM.—EGYPTIAN ANTIQUITIES.

Cairo, Nov. 9, 1845.

WILL you not exclaim at me for having written two letters from Cairo without even alluding to the Pyramids? And no wonder that you *should wonder* at the omission, which is tantamount to the tragedy of Hamlet being announced for representation with the part of Hamlet to be left out! But know that I have not yet approached them, although they are within ten miles of Cairo, (and from the exceeding clearness of the atmosphere they give one the idea of being much nearer); and every time I turn my eyes towards Ghizeh, those majestic masses appear to frown a cold and silent reproach upon me for having allowed so many days to elapse without paying

them the tribute due from all travellers to the wonders of art, and carrying the homage of my impatience, curiosity, and admiration to the venerable feet of these the elder-born of the monuments of antiquity. The truth is, that the waters from the late inundation still cover part of the plain that intervenes between Cairo and Ghizeh, so that until they subside, the Pyramids cannot be approached by the direct road. To get at them *now*, a circuitous route which doubles the distance must be taken; and this would entail upon us, in this season of short days, the necessity of passing a night in the adjacent tombs,—a plan to be avoided for many reasons which touch travellers too nearly, in this land of superfluous animation, to be wholly overlooked by them. We have therefore judged it advisable to defer our visit to the Pyramids until our return from Upper Egypt; and, although I at first objected to this arrangement, in my natural impatience to see all that is within my reach with as little delay as possible, I now really think it the plan best adapted to ensure my complete enjoyment of the wonders that we are about to visit, by reserving the greatest of them all for the last. This, then, is the reason of our having apparently given the go-by to the Pharaohs for the Caliphs,

while, in fact, all our aspirations have been directed towards the former; and this is the reason why you must be contented to hear for the present only of Moslem Egypt, when I dare say you were expecting that I should write you an account of the antique land in hieroglyphics!

Apropos to our voyage to the Upper country, we have anticipated it by many days, and are about to commence it almost immediately, having been advised to profit by the north wind now prevailing, which is so material an assistance in ascending the Nile against the current, in the sailing boats of the country. This day we have concluded an agreement with Mr. Walne, the English Consul at Cairo, for his *Dahabieh*, the Swift, (the most complete thing of the kind on the river,) to take us as far as we can proceed beyond the First Cataract; and as soon as Mohammed has laid in the rest of our stores,—for we must carry almost everything with us—we shall be off. In the mean time I am making the most of my short stay here to see as much as I possibly can of such things as only require a cursory glance; but much must necessarily be postponed until I return, when I intend to make a longer sojourn in Cairo; and I shall then, I hope, indemnify myself at my leisure for the sacrifice I am now

making in turning my back upon many things of deep interest and importance, to which, through the kindness of a few highly intellectual Europeans, resident in Cairo, my attention has been directed. They are of a nature to require a more serious examination than my time here at present admits of, and therefore I reserve them for my return, when I hope to make you participate in whatever information may be imparted to me. I allude more particularly to the pious and philanthropic exertions of the Rev. Theophilus Lieder, a German clergyman, and distinguished Oriental scholar, head of the Protestant Mission in Egypt, and his no less meritorious wife, (an Englishwoman I am proud to say,) both of whom have devoted their time and their great talents to the education of the poor Arab, Coptic, and Jewish children of Cairo, and have succeeded so completely in winning the confidence of their parents of the three conflicting religions, that they thankfully permit their offsprings to frequent the schools so admirably conducted by this truly Christian pair. Mrs. Lieder has kindly promised to explain to me on my return here the whole system pursued by her, and to afford me an opportunity of personally inspecting the interesting establishment she so ably directs. Her's in-

deed is a labour of love worthy of the Divine Master she serves, and truly may it be said that she has adopted for the standard of her conduct those beautiful words of our Saviour: Bring unto me little children and refuse them not, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.

Have I told you anything yet of the climate of Egypt at this season of the year? It is something of which I had previously no idea—something almost fabulous — the delightful sunny warmth of Sicily without its oppressiveness or the dreadful drawback of the Sirocco. There is a crystal transparency, an elastic lightness in the atmosphere here, which renders the act of inhaling it an absolute enjoyment—mere existence a blessing! and I can now understand that to the happy influence of such a climate the character of the natives of this country owes much of its joyous light-heartedness and insensibility to the privation of all the creature-comforts of life. Here " one day telleth another " in bright serenity; and to us, natives of a cloudier clime, it appears perfectly marvellous that we should have it in our power to make out-of-door projects for many days to come, without premising those words of doubtful import, which always accompany similar arrangements in England, viz. "*if the*

weather is fine,"—for we know that to-morrow *here* will be as fine as to-day. To be sure there *are* drawbacks to the delights which such a temperature is calculated to confer, for the genial warmth gives vitality to such myriads of flies that they amount to an absolute plague, and are, I think, a more annoying and disgusting visitation even than the musquitoes (which likewise abound); for besides being personal torments, they cannot be excluded from swarming about our food, whereas the musquitoes, when once they have fed upon ourselves, go to sleep and leave our repasts unmolested. As to the other plagues of Egypt which were held up to me *in terrorem* before I left Europe, I begin to think that in that particular the land must have been somewhat calumniated, for as yet I have seen nothing unclean (with the exception of a few fleas) that either crawls, jumps, or, according to Dean Swift's authority, skips. This I attribute, first, to the great cleanliness of the sleeping-rooms at Shepheard's Hotel; secondly, to never having ridden upon the saddles of the country, which being arranged with carpets, generally harbour live stock—and lastly, to the practice I observe of always undressing when I return from a ride through the crowded streets of Cairo, and causing

my clothes to be well shaken and brushed. With these precautions, I believe one may remain as free from unpleasant visitations in Egypt as elsewhere, and as far as my experience yet goes, I have no hesitation in declaring it to be less infested with vermin than I have found many parts of the South of France, Spain, Naples, Russia, and last, not least, Constantinople.

The great topic of conversation at present here is the approaching marriage of Mohammed Ali's youngest daughter with Kiamil Pasha, a Circassian *protégé* of the Viceroy's, whom he thus exalts and enriches by making him one of his own family. The preparations for this interesting event are carrying on upon a splendid scale. The Pasha gives the bride, besides her marriage portion, two hundred and eighty thousand pounds worth of jewels (for which item all the first diamond-merchants of London, Paris, and Vienna have been put in requisition), and the palace of his late son-in-law, the Defterdar Bey of execrable memory, newly decorated and furnished with the utmost magnificence. As soon as the *écrin* and the Princess's hareem are completed, the nuptials will be solemnized; but as this is not expected to be for some weeks, I am in hopes that I may return here in time to witness some of the public

rejoicings that are to take place on the occasion. Two days ago we were admitted to see the bridal habitation, and really it will be a sumptuous affair when completed, in spite of some of those incongruities which are always to be detected in eastern palaces, and are terrible flaws to the practised eye of an European, which prefers less glitter and more harmony.

The Defterdar's palace is situated in the Esbekieh (the great square of Cairo); it is the mansion that was occupied by General Kleber when he commanded the French forces here, and the garden behind it was the scene of his assassination. After the instalment of Mohammed Ali to the Pashalik of Egypt, the Sultan, distrustful and jealous of the growing popularity and energetic proceedings of his new representative, sent Mohammed Bey Defterdar from Constantinople invested with the charge of Treasurer to the Egyptian government, but in reality as a spy who was to report to head-quarters all the doings of the Pasha. That shrewd and clear-sighted individual at once perceived the real nature of this functionary's mission, and feeling that he could not rid himself of the annoyance, contrived to neutralize it by converting the spy into a son-in-law. He married the Defterdar

Bey to his eldest daughter, and thus, by the powerful incentive of self-interest, made him his own creature. The cruelties and atrocities of that ferocious Turk, however, necessitated his being removed from Cairo some years afterwards, and deprived of the power of sacrificing human life as he was wont to do in his stern and brutal execution of justice. And it is whispered that Mohammed Ali, finding his son-in-law troublesome even in the distant province to which he had banished him, remedied the evil by causing the Defterdar Bey to partake of one of those cups of coffee which are in common use among Eastern Princes, and which never fail to procure to the recipient a speedy passport to the next world. That which is certain is, that the Defterdar died suddenly at the identical moment when his rebellious conduct had involved the necessity of sending an armed force against him; and that having been placed beyond the possibility of doing any further harm, he now occupies a distinguished place in the mausoleum which Mohammed Ali has built for himself, and which already contains the tombs of all the departed members of the Viceroy's family.

To return to the palace. If I thought that an upholsterer's catalogue could interest you, I

would tell you not only how the grand reception room is hung with azure brocade and gold, how the vast ante-room at the head of the grand staircase is adorned with pier-glasses innumerable, and the circular windows at each end shaded with curtains of violet gauze flowered with gold, how the Princess's bedchamber is one mass of white satin damask and gold fringes, with delicate under-curtains of rose-coloured silk, &c., &c.; but I should also enter into a detail of the profusion of beautiful articles of European furniture introduced amidst the divans and cushions of Oriental usage, and describe the crystals, and porcelains, and pendules, and reading chairs, and their various positions, with a touch of Mons. de Balzac's minutiæ in such affairs. I shall merely specify that in the principal saloon are the two largest and finest pier-glasses I ever saw, but that the admirable effect they are calculated to produce is much lessened by the injudicious manner in which they are placed. I ventured to express my opinion to the chief of the eunuchs, who accompanied us through the apartments; but he shrugged his shoulders, and remarked that the choice and distribution of the whole of the Palace decorations were confided to Hakkakin Bey (an Ar-

menian, and a near relative of the Viceroy's Prime Minister, Artim Bey), and that as he had been educated in England, he knows how everything ought to be done, and from his judgment in matters of taste there is no appeal. On the evening of that day I met Hakkakin Bey at the house of our Consul-General, Colonel Barnett, and before I became aware of his identity, had been betrayed into criticising some of the embellishments under his superintendence. He appears a most gentlemanly, well-bred man, and speaks English perfectly, having been educated at Oxford.

While I am on the subject of weddings, I must tell you that yesterday we met no less than three marriage-processions in the streets, —that is to say, the procession in which the bride, accompanied by all her female friends, walks through the principal thoroughfares of the city, before she is taken to the bridegroom's house, and in which the bridegroom himself and his male relatives take no part. In Cairo this pageant is generally taken advantage of to celebrate another rite, that of the circumcision of any male in the family who may have attained the age prescribed by the Mahometan religion (eight or nine years) for the perform-

ance of that ceremony; and the two processions being united, form together a very noisy and strange spectacle. Of this double description were those which we met yesterday, and as I am very certain that you can never have witnessed anything similar, I shall herewith endeavour to give you some idea of them, premising that as all were alike one description will answer for the three.

First came two wrestlers, quite naked, with the exception of a cloth fastened round their loins; their bodies were smeared with oil, and they pretended to perform gymnastic feats, but in reality did nothing but stop all the well-dressed passengers in their way, and solicit from them *Bachshish* (the first Arab word an European learns here *to his cost*, as it is addressed to him from all quarters, and means a present in money). These were followed by two others equally naked, but wearing a sort of helmet, and furnished with round bucklers, and swords, which they flourished about with strange contortions. Then came a band of musicians, playing upon a variety of instruments peculiar to this country, pipes, flutes, tambourines, darabookhas, (a sort of Arab drum, beaten on with the hands,) guitars made out of cocoa-nuts, and violins with one

string, accompanied by singing and clapping of hands, the whole producing such a *tintamarre* as would have driven an Italian Maëstro stark mad. (If harmony was not better understood in England in the reign of our Elizabeth, than it is in Egypt in the nineteenth country, I can well understand why the term, "*a noise of music*," was then given to a band. This *par parenthèse.*) After the musicians came the barber's apparatus, a machine very much like Punch's show-box, and covered all over with gilding; this was mounted upon a camel, whose red morocco housings were beautifully ornamented with cowrie shells. Then followed that important functionary, the barber himself; and finally came a led horse very richly caparisoned, with a velvet saddle all covered with gold embroidery and tassels, and upon this horse was seated the little boy who was on that day to fulfil the first rite of the Mahometan faith. The child was very richly dressed *in girl's clothes*, having his hair plaited in a number of tresses, adorned with small gold coins, as the women wear their's in this country. He held an embroidered handkerchief to his face, and was supported on the horse upon either side by a male relative, followed by a number of others walking in rows of seven or eight.

And now came the bridal train, opened by another company of musicians, preceding all the younger female part of the society, who were covered to the eyes with large shawls, arranged in the same manner that the usual wrappings of black silk are, and holding large bouquets of natural flowers. These were followed by a dais, or canopy of yellow silk, the four gilt poles of which were upheld by four men very grandly turbaned and robed; and underneath it walked the bride, covered from head to foot with a scarlet Cashmere shawl, so arranged as effectually to conceal the person, eyes and all, leaving nothing visible but the loose yellow boots that are always worn by Mahometan women out of doors. A circlet of diamonds and gold, was bound round her head outside of the shawl, and as she could not see, she was supported and led along on each side by a matron of her family, scrupulously muffled in the usual black silk mantle. Then came all the elder females covered to the eyes in the same manner, a sable crew; and these latter were followed by a company of hired women, who closed the procession, uttering the *zughareet*, or shrill quavering notes with which every joyful event in this country is always accompanied. These cries are heard at a

great distance, and produce a most singular effect, unlike anything I ever heard before, and although only sustained upon one note, they are not unmusical. Imagine such a procession as I have just described approaching St. George's, Hanover-square!



I have been to visit the tombs, erroneously called by most travellers, those of the Caliphs, which form so beautiful a feature in the panoramic view of Cairo, as seen either from the citadel, or the minaret of Gama Tayloon. They

stand outside of the Bab-el-Nasr, or Gate of Victory, at a short distance from the city, on the edge of the desert, and each possesses its mosque —graceful specimens of the Arab architecture of the fourteenth century. But the Caliphs do not sleep beneath them; — their tombs, long since destroyed, occupied the site where the silk bazaar of Cairo now stands; and these beautiful mausolea, now, alas! crumbling to decay, cover the dust of the Baharides and Memlook Sultans. Verily Egypt is the land of tombs! and, from the first Pharaoh to the last Memlook, its rulers appear to have thought more of building palaces for the dead, than cities for the living; the proof of which is, that their tombs still endure, while their cities have almost all been swept away—ay, even into oblivion.

In the principal mosque attached to the Memlooks' tombs, the one known by the name of *El Kait Bey*, which was built by El Ashraf Aboo-l Nusr Kaitbey e' Zaheree, is the print of a man's foot distinctly impressed upon a black marble slab, and said to be the foot-mark of the Prophet. This relic is placed within a little covered enclosure open at the sides, and our Arab attendants marked their respect for it by reverently touching it with their hands, which they after-

wards kissed ; but we could learn nothing of the tradition attached to this stone, or how it got there.

Riding home we peeped into Mohammed Ali's mausoleum, already well peopled with tombs, many of whose tenants were snatched from life in extreme youth, while he for whom that last asylum was erected—he, the patriarch of the family, and whose years have already exceeded the number allotted to the life of man, still survives ; hale, robust, scarcely bent by the accumulation of seventy-six winters, he holds a firmer grasp of existence than his son and expected successor Ibrahim ; and for the welfare of the country over which he rules, it is to be hoped that he will live many years longer. This mausoleum is covered in, carpeted, and furnished with sofas for the convenience of the ladies of the family, who, in accordance with Mahometan customs, occasionally go there to meditate among the graves of their relatives. A large place under the principal dome marks the place where Mohammed Ali himself will be laid. There is nothing grand or graceful, or even solemn, in this last receptacle for the dead, but there is something better—proofs of that strong family affection which characterizes Mohammed Ali, and which has led

him to take a mournful pleasure in gathering together, in the spot destined to receive his own remains, the mortal relics of all who belong to him—even those who have died at a great distance, in order that together they may resolve themselves to dust, and together await the resurrection,

* * * * *

You can imagine nothing to equal the bustle and noise of Cairo during the two last days; at no time a very quiet place, it was absolutely hurried into hysterics the day before yesterday by the arrival of the two overland mails, one going out to India, the other coming from it, and both depositing for a few hours their respective live cargos in the old city of the Caliphs. The confusion this incursion occasions cannot be described, in a place like this, possessing only two European hotels, which are generally tolerably well filled with other travellers, and the proprietors of which are not over inclined to put themselves much out of the way for mere birds of passage like the Indian passengers, who are not allowed to make any delay at Cairo beyond the necessary time for making up the mails. It often happens that the floors and staircases of these two hotels are dotted with mattrasses for the

accommodation of ladies' maids, &c., &c., and two or three children are stowed away for the night on the top of a grand-pianoforte. In short the expedients people are driven to on these occasions, are both painful and ridiculous; and not unfrequently when the weary travellers believe themselves to be peaceably disposed of until the morrow they are suddenly roused up in the middle of the night and obliged to resume their fatiguing progress. Certainly, those who have borne the journey well, make the most of their time during their short stay here; such scampering about upon donkeys as there is! such displays of pink and blue bonnets, and dandy travelling-caps, hastily turned out of their band-boxes to create a momentary sensation! such cheerful faces beneath them of lovely young girls and light-hearted young cadets on their way out to India, the world all before them, and everything tinged with the bright hues of hope! And on the other hand, many a wan and sallow face and broken-down form are to be seen, betokening the prematurely old constitutions of those who in years are still young, and who are returning home in quest of that blessing, health (how far more precious than all the wealth of India!) of which they have been bereft, perhaps

for ever, on the banks of the Indus and of the Ganges.

A melancholy episode has marked the meeting of the two last mails in Cairo, and when I tell you of the painful manner in which it came to my knowledge, you will easily understand that it has left a very sad impression upon my mind, although the person it most nearly concerns is a complete stranger to me. At the moment I was taking leave of Mrs. Lieder, in her own house, a young lady passed through the room in which we were, whom Mrs. Lieder stopped and introduced to me as Miss D., adding that she had arrived from England by the last overland mail. Very naturally, but as it would appear very inopportunely, I inquired whether she was going on to India; but instead of answering me, the poor girl burst into tears, and rushed out of the room. Mrs. Lieder then told me that Miss D. had in fact come here on her way to India, whither she was proceeding to be married to a gentleman in the Company's service, to whom she had been some time engaged, and that she had been confided for the voyage to the care of a family going out to the same Presidency, and was also accompanied by the brother of her future husband. I have already

told you that the outward-bound and the homeward-bound mails met here; the latter brought a letter to Miss D. from the father of her intended, announcing to her the death of his son, and recommending her not to proceed beyond Cairo, as the object of her voyage had been thus cruelly frustrated. The family she accompanied were obliged to pursue their journey, and so was the brother of her dead lover; and she, poor afflicted one, was to be left alone with her grief in a strange land! Can you imagine anything more desolate than such a position? In this trying conjuncture, Mrs. Lieder stepped forward, like a true Christian, and took the sorrowing stranger to her home, there to remain until measures can be taken for her return to England under proper protection. Surely the parable of the good Samaritan never found a more touching illustration than on this occasion; and as I listened to the cheerful and unaffected simplicity with which the excellent Mrs. L. related the whole occurrence, only passing lightly over her own share in it, I thought that if piety always produced the same practical results and wore the same winning exterior, (instead of assuming the ascetic and forbidding aspect which sometimes renders it

unlovely in the eyes of the gay and thoughtless, and is calculated to repel rather than to attract,) the hardest and most impenitent hearts must be touched by the beauty of a faith so full of charity and good works, and be persuaded not only *to believe*, but to "*go and do likewise!*"

Since I have been here I have had an opportunity of hearing the great question of a railroad across the Desert to Suez much discussed. It would be presumptuous in me to venture an opinion of my own as to its *practicability*, but I can bear full testimony to its being a most *desirable* object, not only as regards the commercial interests of England, but in facilitating the progress of the overland travellers to and from India, and converting that which is now the most fatiguing part of the journey into the easiest and most agreeable. It generally happens that the two mails meet here, the steamer belonging to the Transit Company at Alexandria bringing the Indian passengers who have landed there from Southampton, and depositing them at Cairo, where they are allowed a very short time to enjoy themselves, after having been stowed away in the Nile Steamer for thirty-six hours closer than the

inmates of a slave-ship. They are then packed into vans provided by the Transit Company, in which they are jumbled across the Desert, and generally reach Suez in the space of twenty-four hours or so, their baggage, provisions, &c. being sent upon camels and asses. At Suez they are at once embarked in the Red Sea steamer, *et vogue la galère!* The passengers coming from India exactly reverse this line of march, but they are exposed to greater suffering and inconvenience; for, after a long sea-voyage, with its concomitant miseries, they are hurried across the Desert without delay, and such among them as are in too invalid a state to be able to support the rough vans, are put into a sort of sedan chair, which is suspended between two donkeys, and thus they are trotted across the dreary waste.

Now, could the great desideratum of a rail-road across the Desert be accomplished, all this suffering would be obviated, for *in less than three hours* the Indian passengers would be transported, baggage and all, from Cairo to Suez, and *vice versâ.* In short, the terminus would be established at Boulac, the port of Cairo; and the rail-road would thus run without interruption from the Red Sea to the Nile,

and would enable travellers to go *overland* from London to Calcutta, *viâ* Marseilles, without ever having recourse to post-horses, except for a few stages between Paris and Chalons-sur-Saone!

As in all places local politics take precedence of general ones, I have heard the *pour et contre* of the railway question much canvassed since I have been in Cairo; and it has been my good fortune to form the acquaintance of one who has the power of explaining the advantages accruing from such an undertaking better than any one else could possibly do, as by him and by his late brother, Galloway Bey, the original idea was conceived of thus as it were diminishing the distance between the Red Sea and the Nile, and squeezing the weary passage of the Desert into an agreeable three hours' morning drive. These gentlemen submitted their great plan to Mohammed Ali, who possesses both genius to appreciate and energy to execute such a conception, were he left to his own unbiassed judgment; and so much did he *then* approve of it that he empowered Messrs. Galloway to send for machinery and rails to England in order to commence operations. But before that could be accomplished, foreign intrigue had been effectually at

work to bias the Viceroy's mind against the adoption of a plan so adapted to secure advantages to the commercial interests of England over those of those of other European Powers; and his Highness gave orders for proceedings to be suspended for an indefinite period. In the interval, Galloway Bey died, but his brother, Mr. R. H. Galloway, of Alexandria, has never relinquished the desire and intention of effecting his project, and is still strenuously at work, both in Egypt and with our Government at home, endeavouring to awaken them to the advantages which would result *to both* from the execution of such a plan.

Mr. Galloway has given me a pamphlet published by himself on the subject,* in which, with a clearness and precision that leave nothing to be wished for, he lays down to demonstration the facilities for the undertaking in a scientific point of view connected with the localities. Although this is ground upon which *I* cannot venture to enter, his manner of treating it strikes me as being unanswerable. He points out the enormous financial advantages to be derived from it by the two Governments of England and Egypt, and

* "Observations on the Overland Communication with India," by J. G. Galloway, Esq.

above all he prostrates the arguments advanced for two other rival schemes, namely, the canalization system which has been advocated in two directions, from Boulac to Suez, and from Suez to the Mediterranean. I shall not attempt to follow him through the close and logical reasoning he pursues as to the difficulties that would attend the formation of either of those canals, but will merely tell you that I rest my adhesion to his opposition to them upon the simple fact that if *either* or *both* of them were made, *neither* of them could be available—at least with advantage. The one from Boulac to Suez would involve such a complicated system of locks, that the time required for the passage would be equal to that now taken by the caravan transit; and the one from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean would be useless from the nature of that part of the Mediterranean coast upon which it would open, and which offers no safe place for the formation of a port, and is all but unapproachable by vessels. Mr. Galloway founds his statement of this latter fact upon high naval authority, and quotes an admirable letter on the subject from Captain Glascock, R.N., whose experience on that coast, and his skill as a navigator, both conduce to render his opinion a most valuable one.

It would appear that Mohammed Ali, alive to the advantages of this railroad scheme, yet vibrating under the influence of the representations which have been made to him by those inimical to such an undertaking, and who have persuaded him that the British Government would not agree to pay a postage upon the conveyance of the mails, caused it to be officially signified about a year ago that he was ready to commence at once upon the construction of the Desert Railroad, *provided our Government would make him a proposal as to a remunerating postage for conveying the mails through his dominions.* This proposition was duly communicated to Downing Street, but it has produced no answering result—no postal arrangement has been entered upon—and there matters rest,—more 's the pity!

November 10.

We are to embark this evening, after dinner, on our voyage for Upper Egypt, and I have been employing my last morning in viewing Doctor Abbott's valuable Egyptian Museum, which has been carefully collected by himself during a residence of many years in this country (first as chief medical officer of the Viceroy's Fleet, and latterly as a private practitioner at Cairo). It

is perhaps the most perfect private collection existing, and, as such, I cannot help regretting that Doctor A. has not been induced to dispose of it either to the English Government or to some high-minded and wealthy individual of our country, who would convert it into a source of national instruction and amusement. Whereas at present, although nothing can exceed the polite and liberal manner in which Doctor A. allows free access to it, it is necessarily restricted to the knowledge of those travellers who pass through Cairo, and who may, like myself, have had the good fortune to be furnished with an introduction to the Doctor.

I thought this inspection was a good initiatory preparation for the journey I am about to commence among the antique monuments of Egypt; but I hope I may understand the subject better when I return, for I own to you in all humility that I am at present unable to discriminate between the merits of works of Egyptian art, dating from the times of the Pharaohs (when it is said to have attained its highest degree of perfection), or from those of the Greek Ptolemies, and the Roman Cæsars, when, according to the dictum of antiquaries, it had begun to exhibit signs of degeneration. Among the objects pos-

sessed by Doctor Abbott which excited my especial admiration, not only from their high antiquity but the extraordinary preservation in which they remain, are the gold ring of Cheops (the founder of the great Pyramid), which is universally allowed to be the oldest monument in the world, consequently that ring may lay claim to being the oldest *bijou* extant—and the ring of the Pharaoh of the Exodus, in the form of a scarabæus. Both contain hieroglyphic signets of the sovereigns to whom they belonged, so sharply and delicately engraven that one might suppose them the work of yesterday; and Doctor A. has kindly promised me an impression in wax of each when I return to Cairo. Cheops' ring has excited the covetousness of more than one amateur, and large sums (three and four hundred pounds) have been offered to the Doctor for it, but in vain—he does not like to break his collection by parting with its greatest gem, and he is in the right; for thousands instead of hundreds could not repay him for such an infraction of its completeness! Another interesting relic is the helmet and part of the breast-plate of Shishak, the Pharaoh who sacked Jerusalem in the time of Rehoboam, within fifty years of the reign of Solomon, and

nearly one thousand years before the Christian era. Doctor A. himself discovered Shishak's oval on one of the plates of the armour, so that its genuineness is incontrovertible — but were I to specify all the wonders his collection contains, my letter would be endless; and as I have been twice summoned to dinner within the last minute, I must herewith close it, and bid you farewell until I address you from the Nile.

CHAPTER VI.

DEPARTURE FROM CAIRO. — THE SWIFT. — ARAB CREW. — ARAB MUSIC.—ARAB DANCES.—RIVER SCENERY.—A BREEZE.—EGYPTIAN CAVALRY. — LIFE ON THE NILE.—ARAB TEMPERANCE.—ARAB MISERY.—CROCODILES.—A MEETING.

Off Minieh, Nov. 14, 1845.

WELL ! here we are upon the Nile, installed most comfortably in our little floating habitation, and looking forward to its becoming our home for the next six weeks, without any apprehension of weariness or ennui creeping in to paralyze our quiet enjoyment of the new order of things that is to make up the sum of our existence until we return to Cairo, and to " the busy haunts of men." Much monotony must inevitably characterize the voyage I have embarked in, and this I do not shrink from *on my own account;* I have, however, some scruples of conscience in entailing upon you the sort of log-book information, which is all that can possibly result from the first part of my navigation upon the Nile, where my observa-

tions must be circumscribed to the state of the wind and the weather, the actual depth of the river, and so forth. And if our correspondence were to be sustained and regulated by post-office arrangements, I should feel bound to select only such bright spots in the course I am about to run, as might occur between the departures of the periodical mail-trains, or *malles postes*. But cut off, as it were, from all European associations, and most completely debarred from all European means of communication, I shall note down our daily proceedings as they occur, and take my chance of conveying to you, as occasions may present themselves, a transcript of our actual mode of life. These occasions I fear will be few and far between, for they must principally consist in meeting travellers on their return from the scenes I am about to visit, and we have but little to expect in that quarter, as it would appear that the Nile is not the fashion this year. Up to the present period only two or three individuals have left Cairo for Upper Egypt, and I believe that they are Indian travellers, who contemplate striking off from Thebes for Cosseir, from thence to proceed to Aden, where the Red Sea steamers touch on their way to Bombay. But, independently of the

contingent chances of such hap-hazard meetings, my Cairo banker has furnished me with the means of getting letters to him, through his correspondents, from one or two places between Cairo and the First Cataract; so that, between these two resources, I think I shall manage to keep you *au courant* of our adventures (should any befall us) in our transit to the Upper country.

We embarked on the 10th, as I told you we should do, and it was with no small degree of regret that I quitted Cairo. The kindness I had experienced there, the number of things I had left unseen, and the enjoyment I had derived from those that I had seen, all combined to render me unwilling to leave it so soon. But, on the other hand, the reasons for a speedy departure were cogent; the northerly winds were blowing—the season for their being replaced by the southerly ones was approaching—and, above all, the Dahabieh and her crew were hired at a daily expense, which had commenced; — a vulgar and grovelling consideration, you will say, for the winding up of my argument — but alas! in what circumstance in life does not the odious "six-and-eightpenny principle" intrude its dirty influence, forcing us to calculate where

we would only enjoy, and converting many a bright and beautiful day-dream into a dry arithmetical exercise?

Up to the last day we had hoped that Mr. P. would be enabled to accomplish his expedition up the Nile at the same time with ourselves; but the friend that he is expecting from England to accompany him in his extensive Eastern wandering has not yet reached Cairo, and, consequently, he is still detained there. Our Dahabieh, therefore, departed alone from Boulac; but we are not altogether without expectations that his boat may catch us at some of our resting places up the country. Both he and Mr. Galloway accompanied us on board, and when they took leave of us and stepped on shore, we felt that we had fairly turned our backs upon all European associations beyond our own little party, and that for some weeks to come we must forget that there are such things in the world as newspapers, letters, gossip, or those pleasant episodes which occur to the traveller in civilized countries, in the shape of welcome faces and familiar sounds, recalling the land of one's birth in the land of strangers.

Before we push off from the Quay, however, I must give you some idea of our conveyance.

The Dahabieh which we have hired at the rate of three thousand piastres a month (£30), is one of three boats of the same description, which, on account of their superior accommodation, have borne away the palm from all others on the Nile. Ours, called "The Swift," belongs to the English consul, Mr. Walne, and the other two are the property of Ahmet Pasha, and of Mr. Page, who, I believe, is connected with the Transit Company. Travellers who are not so fortunate as to secure one of these Dahabiehs, must have recourse to the common boats of the country, called Cangias, a smaller description of craft, which, being used for the transport of grain, slaves, and other merchandize, are all of them floating colonies of vermin, and necessitate not only being sunk for two or three days in the river before they can be entered with impunity, but being painted anew, having all their crevices filled up, and every article of accommodation furnished for them; and all this at the expense of the party hiring them. But the three Dahabiehs in question are exclusively reserved for travellers, and they are carefully laid by, painted, and kept scrupulously clean in the season when there are no tourists on the Nile. Their price is at least double that

for which the country boats can be procured, but their advantages are tenfold.



These Dahabiehs are very graceful looking vessels, with two masts and three Latteen sails, and they are constructed with cabins for the accommodation of passengers which occupy the whole after-part of the deck. Ours has two excellent cabins, fitted up at each side with Turkish divans, capable of being converted at night into four beds, and very neatly furnished with carpets and cushions, besides two book-shelves, well stocked with works of reference

for Egyptian travellers. There is a *cabinet de toilette* beyond these, and in front is a tent or awning where the servants sleep; and I assure you that when all the doors are thrown open, our present abode has quite as consequential an appearance as many of the seaside lodging-houses in England, where grand pianos are located, and quadrilles are danced in drawing-rooms twelve feet long by ten. Of course our bedding, linen, canteens, and *batterie de cuisine*, &c., are supplied by ourselves, and Mohammed's perfect knowledge of the outfit required for such an excursion has saved us a world of trouble, and his cleverness and good management in providing everything that he knew to be adapted to English tastes and habits, has really not left us the possibility of forming a wish. We had wisely prepared ourselves to expect a somewhat scrambling life of it, but most agreeably have we been surprised at finding everything going on under his auspices as smoothly as though we were in the best hotel on shore, and our table as well supplied as if the Marché St. Honoré were within his reach. Our crew consists of a Reis, or captain, a pilot, and fourteen Arab sailors, besides which we have a Caireen cook, who is quite an artist,

and our trusty interpreter Mohammed, making in all eighteen Mussulmans, to whose tender mercies we have consigned ourselves for the next six weeks.

The wind was fair when we left the Quay of Boulac, and we should have gone on without let or hindrance, had we not been obliged to stop at Old Cairo to take in part of our crew, who were to join us from thence. These men, with their constitutional irregularity, were not forthcoming when we anchored there, and many were the hoarse imprecations uttered against their dilatoriness by Reis Ali, their captain, and the more ominous threatenings half-expressed by Mohammed of giving them a lesson which they would remember ever afterwards. At last, after an hour's delay, the loiterers made their appearance, and were suffered very quietly to climb from their boat upon the deck of the Dahabieh; but the moment they were all safe there, and that the boat which had brought them had pushed back again to Old Cairo, Mohammed, who was lying in wait for them, armed with his courbash, fell upon the unlucky delinquents, and laid upon the shoulders of each just the same sort of punishment that a sportsman is wont to inflict upon an unruly pointer. The poor fellows took

it quite as submissively as a dog could do, thereby showing that their training has been much the same, and that they have been driven by blows instead of led by reason; and when I remonstrated with Mohammed upon such a system, he replied in his broken English, "You not beat these men, you do nothing with them—you soft with them, they laugh at you! They not the same as English people,—*they must get stick.* If I not beat these men, others will run away the first place we stop at." A good illustration of the King in one of Voltaire's tales, who cut off the heads of some of his subjects "pour encourager les autres."

I do not think that years of residence among these people would ever reconcile me to such a brutalizing way of managing them, but that of the two evils I should prefer being laughed at by them to countenancing the use of the stick, as advocated by Mohammed. In less than half an hour after this *rough* beginning to our voyage, the whole crew were seated on the forecastle of the vessel in a group, Arab fashion (that is, upon their heels), round an immense wooden bowl filled with a mess made of lentils and onions boiled in water, and poured over a quantity of broken rye-bread, and, before commencing this

frugal supper, they chanted a sort of a grace, the first words of which were sung by one voice alone, the remainder repeating it in chorus, and bowing their heads towards the ground in time. They then fell to with great appetite, each man dipping in his hand in turn and carrying it filled to his mouth, until the bowl was speedily emptied. Then one and all arose, filled their tin mugs with Nile water, and, after washing their mouths, they poured the remainder of the water over their hands and wiped them on their only garment (a sort of loose cotton shirt, which leaves their arms and legs quite bare). Again they resumed their places in a circle, but this time it was for another purpose; two of the men held darabookahs under their arm (a very rude sort of drum, composed of a large earthen vessel in the shape of a chimney-pot, over one end of which is tied a piece of sheep's skin, which the performer strikes with the fingers of both hands), a third had an Arab tambourine with jingles, and a fourth, the leader, blew upon a sort of double pipe, while the remainder accompanied the air with their voices, and kept time by clapping their hands in cadence to the darabookahs and tambourine. Such a wild orchestra surely never was heard, and never were faces, and forms, and draperies more truly in

keeping with the strange sounds produced by it. In the midst of the circle was one of the crew with a long stick in his hand, performing one of those extraordinary dances (in this country called the *the wasp dance*) which used to be peculiar to the (now banished) Ghawazees, or dancing-girls of Cairo — evidently of the same origin as the Mosca, or Fly Dance, which I saw performed by the Gitanas of Granada, and like it characterized by all those strange attitudes and gesticulations of the body which form the base of Oriental dancing. On the prow sat Reis Ali, whiffing away at his chibouque in calm dignity, as though quite unconscious of the noisy scene that was enacting two paces behind him; his young son, Salem, seated at his feet, and his own large crimson turban and decorous blue robes forming a distinguishing contrast to the white turbans and shirts, and naked dark limbs of his crew. Altogether the group would have formed a study for an artist like Decamp,—and such a background as there was to the picture! The sky flooded with the deep amber tints of sunset, melting first into pale green and then into a purple flush, as they mingled with the dark blue of the west; and, standing out against it in strong relief, the pyramids of Ghizeh, with the

eternal sands of the Desert slumbering at their feet and stretching far behind them into illimitable distance. Then rose the crescent moon—how unlike the moon of the West, the cold, pale, silvery moon sung by our poets! In these latitudes it appears to stand out from the sky like a lamp of pale gold suspended in the blue ether;—no wonder that Mahomet should have chosen so beautiful an image for the rallying signal of his followers!—too pure and lovely a symbol by far for a faith so erring and corrupt.

The wind deserted us in the course of the night, and we were compelled to remain tied to the shore for some hours, as the current of the Nile was so strong where we were, that to attempt rowing against it would have been to have exhausted our crew to very little purpose, and our contract only compels the Reis to track during the daytime. At daylight, however, we were under weigh again with a fresh breeze (which was followed up by a breeze of another nature, of which more anon), the pyramids of Ghizeh far behind us, those of Sakkara in view, and beyond them that unsightly pile, the False Pyramid; while the immediate banks of the broad river were fringed with palm groves and Arab huts—wretched habitations formed out of

the mud of the Nile, and partaking of the local hue, that peculiar glowing brown, which tinges everything in this country with the exception of the sky.

And here I must tell you that we started from Cairo with a determination that we should not stop to see anything unless detained by calms or contrary winds, but proceed to our extreme destination as fast as possible, and then, on our way back, take all our sights leisurely as we descend the river, where we are sure of the current always befriending us. Thus, you see I shall have nothing of interest to communicate to you going up the Nile, and in this dearth of incident I am thrown back upon the second "breeze" alluded to above, which marked our first day's navigation, and was of so contrary a description as to have well nigh driven us back to Cairo. And this I do not altogether dwell upon out of idleness, but as a hint which may be serviceable to you and other of our friends who may hereafter be tempted to direct their wanderings this way. If it were possible for travellers in Egypt to dispense with their European servants, they would greatly lessen their annoyances, and I will even say increase their comforts; for, from the moment they set their feet on the shores of Egypt, those

servants, however good and zealous they may be at home, become worse than useless—they become an absolute incumbrance. Unable to speak the language of the country, unwilling to conform to the change of diet and habits which become inevitable, not sustained by the higher intellectual motives which enable their employers to bear such trifling annoyances with equanimity, and forced into an inertness which always causes their tempers to ferment, the few personal services they are required to perform for their masters are more than counterbalanced by the unceasing discontent they exhibit, and the determination they appear amiably to adopt of increasing instead of softening every difficulty that occurs.

It is indispensable for European travellers in the East to take into their service, for the time being, a Dragoman, either a native, or a man thoroughly accustomed to the country and language, who serves as interpreter, courier, caterer, in short superintendent of the ambulatory establishment ; and to this man, always a trustworthy person and highly recommended, you must in all confidence commit yourself, and delegate to him a temporary power which you would never dream of conceding to your own servants at home.

Such a submission to the necessity of the case is sure to excite the implacable jealousy of those who *feel* that they have a prior and stronger claim to their master's confidence, and who will not *understand* that all the well-placed confidence in the world cannot endow them with the power of making themselves useful in the manner possessed by the stranger placed at the head of affairs. And such is the position we now find ourselves thrown into by the collision of Mohammed, whose valuable services are indispensable to us, and a French valet, whose services are equally valuable at home, but completely useless here, and who finds himself so humiliated at seeing the Turk do that which *he* cannot do, that it has become the grounds of a jealousy which has suddenly ripened into a rancorous personal enmity of the most illiberal and unjust nature.

This morning my maid, who is also French, rushed into my cabin, exclaiming that "*Barometre*" (the nearest approach she can make to Mohammed's name), and the valet were going to kill one another; and upon hastening to the field of action, I found the two belligerents at high words, and looking at each other like two angry dogs, prepared to do their worst. After allowing both to tell their story, and listening

dispassionately to the two accounts, we perceived that the Frenchman was manifestly in the wrong. Some point of etiquette, as to which of them was to discharge the duties of the breakfast-table, had led, not only to violent expressions, but to threatening gestures, which so irritated the Turk that he declared he would leave the boat;—I need not tell you that he might as well have *sunk it* for all the chance that would have remained to us of continuing our voyage! However, our timely intervention set matters right, and honour on both sides was satisfied; but how long the peace will last, I know not. While listening to the voluble accusations of the French servant, (which by the bye reminded me of Curran's description of a Frenchman in a passion, that "it was like kicking a dictionary down stairs!") and the choking asseverations of the Turk, I could scarcely forbear laughing at the practical misfortune which the latter declared would ensue to his authority from the humiliation that he had undergone before the sailors: "For," said he, "how can I attempt to beat these men as you saw I did last night, if they perceive that I would suffer any one to beat me?"

The Frenchman's subsequent declarations that if Mohammed were to leave us, he could prove a

complete substitute for him in all things, was equally laughable. He neither speaks or understands a word of any language but his own, and cannot even ask for a glass of water from one of our Arabs without the intervention of an interpreter, yet he assumes the capability of taking the direction of these men, declaring that "avec la langue Française on peut faire tout!" His *suffisance* reminded me of Comte De R. C——, an amiable countryman of his, whom I met some years ago at Vienna; in one of my morning walks I saw him wistfully scanning the play-bills pasted at the corner of the Graben, and begged he would inform me what were to be the representations for that evening. "Desolé de ne pauvoir vous le dire, Madame," was his reply—"J'allois même vous faire la même question, car je ne puis pas dechiffrer ces affiches." "What!" exclaimed I, "after so long a residence in the Austrian States, you do not understand German!" "Non, Madame; je connais passablement mon Français, et je m'y tiens!" The practical evidence he had just afforded me of how far his theory was a good one, was too delightfully amusing ever to be forgotten.

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At Minieh, off which we are now anchored in

order that Mohammed may go to market, and which is the first town of any consequence we have seen since our departure from Cairo, there is a large Egyptian garrison; and a cavalry regiment has just come down to the river-side to water their horses, some of which are very pretty bits of blood, a cross between the Arab and Egyptian horse, with fine heads and good foreheads, and were they only better groomed, would make either admirable light-cavalry chargers, or beautiful Park hacks. The soldiers have all capital seats, and the Egyptian Nizam uniform, although a sad falling off from the Memlook dress—that most graceful of all cavalry costumes — is still superior to the Turkish reformed uniform, inasmuch as that the Egyptian soldiers still wear the full Memlook white drawers confined at their knees with red garters, and their legs are covered with close long white gaiters, such as are worn by the Greeks and Albanians. The red Tarboosh (similar to the Turkish Fez cap) with its long pendent tassel of purple silk, forms the head-dress of the whole Egyptian army.

Near Girgeh, Nov. 16.

I resume my rambling letter so as to have it ready to consign to the Consular Agent at Kenneh, where we expect to arrive to-morrow,

and which is the first in line of succession among the places I have already told you are to afford me facilities of forwarding my letters to Cairo, from whence they are sure to be sent to Europe.

We are quite at home already in the Swift, and lead as regular and primitive a sort of life as we could do in a country parsonage. Up at sunrise, breakfast at eight, (which our Egyptian cook, Hadgee Mustapha, always contrives should be as excellent a repast in its kind as are his dinners;) then we read, work, &c., till the hour of dinner—three o'clock—or if the wind fails us during the forenoon, and our Arabs are in consequence obliged to track the Dahabieh, we go on shore and our sportsmen get some good shooting in the shape of cranes, water-fowl of various descriptions, and wood-pigeons. After dinner we take our coffee upon the deck, and sit there enjoying the delicious atmosphere, and those glorious transitions of colouring in the horizon which here always accompany the decline of day, until tea-time, when our crew generally commence their concert and ball. After which we always devote the remainder of the evening to writing, and at ten o'clock the cabin lights are extinguished, and everybody is in bed. Such is life on the Nile!

Our variations to this monotonous existence

consist in now and then grounding on a sand-bank, an occurrence which does not even possess the questionable merit of rousing us up into a fright. On these occasions our Arabs throw off their sole garment, jump into the water like Newfoundland dogs, and setting their bare shoulders against the keel of the boat, they push her afloat again to the measured Arab chant of "Halee sa" (God help) led by one voice, and taken up in chorus by the rest. They are the merriest, light-hearted young fellows I ever met with, full of fun and jokes among themselves, and, from what I have already seen, hard-working and enduring to a miracle, and gifted with a sobriety and temperance that would put to the blush even the famous Temperance Society of the Pickwick Papers. The other evening after they had been more than half an hour in the water, working like horses to right the boat which had stuck fast upon a sand-bank, we desired Mohammed to give them either wine or brandy to make a warm drink for them after their fatigues. One and all refused anything spirituous, and named coffee in preference, and when it was served to them, tired as they were, they immediately improvised a song upon the occasion, which they sung with a glee quite refresh-

ing to witness. These Arabs can do nothing without singing, an exercise of the lungs which really appears to lighten their labour.

Much, I think, might be done with a people so happily constituted, were they only well governed, and treated like human beings instead of like brutes; but one of Mohammed Ali's favourite dicta is, that if the Fellahs had two shirts he should not be able to govern them. Talk of Irish misery! what is it to compare to Arab misery in Egypt? and the crowning misery here is the arbitrary conscription, mercilessly enforced by the Viceroy, which tears from their homes to keep up a large standing army, *no longer required*, the fathers, husbands, and sons, whose labours are the sole support of their famishing families. To disable themselves from serving as soldiers, the young Fellahs have no scruple in cutting off the fore-finger of their right hand, drawing out their front teeth, and even putting out one of their eyes;* and we

* Before I came to Egypt I had always fancied the account of Mohammed Ali's having organized a Regiment of one-eyed soldiers, in order to obviate the practice of his Fellah subjects putting out one of their eyes to disqualify themselves from serving, to be a traveller's story. Since I have been here, however, I not only know such to be the case, but I am led to wonder how he can ever find materials for forming an entire regiment of two-eyed men.

have not a man in our crew, the Reis and his son excepted, who has not undergone one or other of these mutilations. Mothers even steel their hearts to perform these barbarous operations on their infant boys, as a future safeguard for them from that worst of all evils in their eyes, the dreaded conscription.

Yesterday was marked by us with a white stone, as being the date of our first personal introduction to live crocodiles! I was summoned from my cabin to behold the monstrous reptiles basking on a bank of sand in the river; there were three of them—one enormously large —I should say at least fifteen feet long, and the two others evidently young things. A double-barrelled gun was immediately discharged at them, which caused the little ones to shuffle away into the water in a great fright; but the old fellow treated the salute with superb contempt, and after a second or two that showed he was accustomed to stand fire, waddled in leisurely after them, appearing to be quite conscious that the shot might have been fired at the citadel of Cairo with the same effect as against his own impenetrable scales. We have no rifle on board, but except under very peculiar circumstances, crocodiles are even rifle-proof.

Mohammed, however, says, "If you sing or whistle to the crocodile, he stops to listen, and *lifts up his hands;* then you fire at him *under his arm*, where the skin is soft, and you are sure to kill him." Do not these expressions recall to your recollection the pathetic metaphorical description once given of a hypocrite by an Irish barrister, in one of his pleadings: "Then like a crocodile he put his hand in his pocket, and pulling out his handkerchief, wept false tears?"

Just as I had got thus far, a Dahabieh coming down the river hove in sight, and hoisted the British flag, in compliment to the Union-Jack carried by the Swift. We immediately went alongside of her, and as in the middle of the Nile English formalities, and even English etiquette, are laid aside, and English people meeting there for the first time, scarcely look upon each other in the light of strangers, an exchange of visits took place, and we found the occupant of the boat to be Mr. Davidson, of the Madras Civil Service, returning from an excursion to Thebes to join at Cairo the next overland mail going out to India. Half an hour has been most agreeably passed by us with this intelligent traveller; and now, while the gentlemen

are discussing a bottle of Guinness's porter, I am scribbling away in all haste, in order that I may "sign, seal, and deliver" my despatches to Mr. D., who has kindly volunteered to take charge of them, and post them from Cairo—an opportunity not to be lost. So, for the present, fare thee well!

CHAPTER VII.

KENNEH.—ARAB FILIAL AFFECTION.—A VISIT.—A RIDE.—NILE BIRDS.—THE GHAWAZEE.—EGYPTIAN SCENERY.—LUXOR.—BRIGHT IDEAS.—TEMPLE OF LUXOR.—EGYPTIAN ARCHITECTURE.—AN ANTIQUARY.—ARRIVAL AT ESNEH.—TEMPLE OF ESNEH.—DISENCHANTMENT.—A SHOAL OF CROCODILES.

Off Thebes, Nov. 20, 1845.

I CLOSED my last letter in double quick time that I might insure its reaching the region of post-offices by a safe hand; and now I resume my pen to tell you that, during the night of the 15th, we reached Kenneh, or, more correctly speaking, that part of the Nile nearest to it, for the town lies about a mile and a half inland. It is the residence of an English consular agent, an old Arab named Said Hussein, a Shereef, or descendant of the Prophet, who is Sheikh of the place, said to be very rich, and altogether a very important personage. As we were in hopes of finding letters forwarded to his care for us from Cairo, one of our party went on shore early on the morning of the 16th, to call upon him, accompanied

by Mohammed, who was the bearer of a letter written by the English consul at Cairo to Said Hussein, to apprize him of our passage by Kenneh. They found him seated, like a patriarch, in the open court before his house, surrounded by his sons (the eldest of whom is agent to the East India Company at Cosseir), and receiving the visits and salutations of all the passers by, who severally entered to kiss his hand. Nothing could exceed his courteous reception of the stranger; coffee and pipes were immediately brought, and upon the latter observing that the sons declined smoking, and asking the reason of it, he was informed that it is a mark of respect always shown to parents by their offspring in this country to abstain from smoking in their presence. Indeed the sentiment of filial duty and affection is more strongly felt, and acted upon to the latest period of their lives, by Mahometans than by any other race; and among no people are mothers more fondly cherished and revered than by the Turks and Arabs—a lovely and touching feature in their character, sufficient to redeem a multitude of faults; for the heart that can grow cold to a mother's claims upon its tenderness, is little better than an error of nature

—an incomplete creation—something to wonder at and deplore—alas! why not something *impossible to be found?*

But to return to Said Hussein. When, after pressing solicitations to remain and breakfast with him, his visitor rose to depart, a beautiful Arab horse, richly caparisoned, and attended by a black slave, was brought to convey him back to the boat. A few minutes after he had reached the Dahabieh, one of the Sheikh's sons, a fine portly Arab, came down to pay his respects to me, and to convey his father's pressing invitation that I would land and accept his hospitality; but that being incompatible with our present plan of getting on with as little delay as possible, I stipulated that my visit to the Sheikh should be made upon my return. Nothing could be more flattering than this Arab's expressions; he said that *the waters of the Nile rejoiced at beholding me,* and several other things equally fanciful and poetical, quite in character with Eastern courtesy, which I need not tell you is full of imagination and graceful hyperbole. He brought me a present of melons, and I, in return, was glad to be able to send back with him something agreeable to his taste in the shape of oranges, tea,

and chocolate *bonbons,* all of them articles rarely to be obtained in Upper Egypt.

Finding that the Sheikh's horse had orders to remain in waiting as long as the Dahabieh should be stationary, I could not resist the temptation of trying his paces, so up I got on the fine velvet and gold housings, (to the visible consternation of our good Reis Ali, who had never before seen a woman sit sideways on horse-back, and would not quit my side lest I should fall, but there was no danger of that, as the Sheikh's saddle was so constructed as very much to resemble a pillion,) and away I went to get a distant glimpse of the town, which is not to be seen from the Nile. It was the period of the annual fair of Kenneh, which is held near the banks of the river, at some distance from the town, but a most wretched affair it appeared to me. I had imagined, as Kenneh is the Egyptian depôt for all the merchandize coming from Mecca and the Red Sea, that I should have met with something worth buying from those places, but nothing was to be seen in the booths but pipe-bowls and those porous earthen bottles used all over Egypt for cooling water. Kenneh is celebrated throughout the East for the manufacture of both of those articles; the water-bottles are packed upon enormous rafts and floated down

the Nile to Lower Egypt, apparently without any person being sent to take charge of them. Many of these rafts were met by us on approaching Kenneh, to all appearance left *à la grace de Dieu.*

After leaving Kenneh, the wind, which had favoured us so far, died away, and we were compelled to have recourse to the tedious operation of tracking, which, notwithstanding the cheerfulness evinced by the sailors, I heartily wish could be dispensed with. The distance overcome by this process is inconsiderable, and the labour appears immense; the work of horses instead of men. However, these slow proceedings afford an opportunity for some good shooting, and our table is kept well supplied with wild doves and small water-fowl. We see innumerable flights of pelicans and wild geese, but these are quite beyond the reach of anything but ball; and although this is somewhat tantalizing to a sportsman, I own that I rejoice to see the poor birds flying with impunity above our heads. Plenty of the hawk, kite, and vulture race people the banks of the Nile; unlike their species in our country, which are only to be seen soaring in the high heavens, they fearlessly approach within gun-shot of us, but their lives are respected by all on board, as we have entered into an understanding

that nothing is to be destroyed for the mere pleasure of destroying; in short, nothing is to be fired at that does not come within the class of *game*.

The tracking system also enables us to stop at villages, which we should pass by unnoticed were the wind propitious; in this manner we got a peep at Dishna (a very unimportant little place in itself) of some of that proscribed race, the Ghawazee, or public dancing-girls—so often mistakenly termed Almé by travellers—whom Mohammed Ali has caused to be banished from Cairo on account of the indelicacy of their exhibitions, and the immorality of their lives. These women have been assigned a domicile in one or two small towns of Upper Egypt, thinly populated places where the licence of their example must necessarily be circumscribed to a few; but although the capital has been strictly prohibited to them, yet, nevertheless, a few are still to be found in Cairo, who clandestinely exhibit their performance to strangers for a very high remuneration. One of these Ghawazee was standing on the bank when we reached Dishna, and, struck by the picturesque arrangement of her dress and ornaments, we desired Mohammed to bring her into the boat that we might inspect her more

closely. She neither possessed the beauty of face or of form which I had been led to expect in these Bayadères, but she was one of those fine good-humoured looking creatures to whom the French epithet of *bonne enfant* so completely applies, that no other in any language can replace it. Her habiliments were exceedingly *light and loose* in every sense of the word—full Turkish drawers, and over them a long robe of thin crimson silk, open at the bosom down to the "zoneless waist," and exhibiting no traces of any garment beneath. Her Fez cap and her long plaited hair were adorned with small gold coins, called *Gazis*, and she wore a nose ring (the first I have seen), as well as earrings of gold, a necklace of Gazis, another one of agate, and a third, the prettiest of all, composed of several rows of cloves strung together and fastened at intervals with little gold ten-piastre pieces. Her arms were adorned with bracelets of massive silver, and of various sorts of beads, and her fingers, carefully tipped with henna, were covered with rings. We dismissed her with a small piece of gold money for a *bachshish*, which she gracefully enough acknowledged by kissing it first and then carrying it to her head; but before going on shore she asked for some wine, and tossed off a

large glass of that forbidden beverage without shame, — a disgusting proof of how easily vice levels not only every principle, but every scruple. What a contrast to our poor hard-working sailors, not one of whom will accept of any restorative stronger than coffee, after having been for nearly an hour in the water straining every nerve to right the boat!

Our reception of the fair Ghawazee soon spread through the village, for presently a large group of her companions came trooping down to the river-side, preceded by a band of musicians playing upon all sorts of barbarous Arab instruments; but fortunately the provisions for which we had stopped at Dishna were just put on board, and we pushed off from the land at the very moment when the banished Bayadères were sounding their castanets to the onset—thus escaping an exhibition the cynical immodesty of which must render it intolerable to every female eye.

Between Dishna and Thebes nothing particular occurred. There is no scenery to describe on the banks of the Nile so far as we have yet progressed, and those travellers who have endeavoured to warm their imaginations into a picturesque account of the "flat" but not "unprofitable" aspect of things here, have been either

romancing or dreaming. A low narrow strip of cultivated land borders the river, like a green ribbon, on either side; occasionally a mud village, a Sheikh's tomb, a colony of pigeon-houses, a grove of palm-trees (the Doum or Theban palm, has here replaced the graceful date-palms of Lower Egypt), a *sakkiah*, or a *shadoof* (both of them contrivances for raising the water from the river), diversifies the scene. And beyond, nought is to be seen but the barren sands of the Libyan desert, stretching away to the west, and those of the desert of Suez traversed by the Mokattam ridge of hills, bounding the prospect to the east. I often wonder, if Tom Moore had seen them, as I now do, whether he would ever have written his

> " Fly to the desert—fly with me !
> Our Arab tents thy home shall be, &c., &c."

Heaven defend me from such a flight, even on the back of an Arab steed, and with the tent of Antar himself in perspective !

We reached Thebes, or rather Luxor, which is opposite to it on the eastern bank of the Nile, in the night; and as before going to bed the wind had sunk to a very gentle breeze, we gave orders to anchor there. Somehow or other, notwithstanding our determination not to make an un-

necessary halt anywhere short of our ultimate destination, we could not reconcile ourselves to the idea of passing by Thebes in the dark—our resolution, which had valiantly resisted the Pyramids, staring us in the face, as it were, broke down in anticipation before the fallen majesty of those stupendous remains, and we even agreed that we would indulge ourselves with a partial peep at them. And so we retired to rest to dream of obelisks and sphinxes, and awoke to behold the sun rising above the colossal pillars of the Temple of Luxor, and tinging with rosy light the summit of the lovely obelisk of pale red granite, whose sister has been transported from this sublime solitude to adorn the Place de la Concorde at Paris.

A fragment of fourteen gigantic columns faces the river: this was my first view of the architecture of ancient Egypt, and—shall I confess the truth to you?—while lost in astonishment at the might and massiveness of what I beheld, I could not detect in the emotions they excited any of that delighted admiration which has filled me with enthusiasm at the sight of monuments far less imposing. "This is *stupendous*, indeed," said I to myself, "but is it *beautiful*?" and candour answered No!

While I was dressing in great haste (for although not overwhelmed with admiration, I was by no means paralyzed into Sir Charles Coldstream's "Used Up" state, and my pulse actually throbbed with impatience to be on shore), I pointed out the Obelisk to my maid, telling her that it was the fellow to the one in Paris. Her answer was delicious:—"Tiens!" said she, "le Roi de ce pays-çi a fait venir cela de Paris; après tout il faut avouer, Madame, qu'il n'y a pas d'endroit au monde comme Paris pour fabriquer des belles choses!" As I am on the chapter of this person's bright ideas, I must give you her correct notions of the Nile. (What do you think of sending them to the Geographical Society, in order to clear up the much vexed question of the sources of that mighty river?) Some one had told her during the voyage from Alexandria to Cairo that the Mahmoudieh Canal had been excavated by the Fellahs, who had actually made use of nothing but their hands to dig out the earth with. It would appear that she had afterwards confounded the Canal with the Nile in her imaginings, and in sober earnest believed that the same process had been adopted in forming the bed of the river; for the other evening, when we were sailing along the broadest part of it, she

suddenly exclaimed, "Eh bien! il faut convenir que le peuple de ce pays sauvage est une fameuse race! Dire qu'ils ont creusé cette enorme rivière avec rien que leurs mains! Nous ne serions pas capable d'en faire autant en France!"

We scarcely allowed ourselves time to breakfast before we were on shore. Early as the hour was, the sun had already such power that the sand actually scorched my feet; but on we went, valiantly braving that inconvenience, and the suffocating clouds of dust raised by a ragged troop of Arabs, who immediately surrounded us with the usual clamour for *bachshish;* and soon we stood within the Temple of Luxor, alas! so choked up with a vile Arab village that we could neither comprehend its disposition nor trace out its outline. We could understand nothing but the portions taken by us in detail as we passed along them, carefully picking our steps that we might not crush to death some pigeon so tame that it would not move out of our way, or some brood of tiny chickens just emancipated from the egg-shell, or some new-born lamb or kid, or some naked infant sprawling in the sand. Here, an old ram butted at us from his dark corner, as if to call our attention to the living type of the Ram-headed Deity multiplied in the hierogly-

phics around us;—there, a crouching woman twitched our garments as her outstretched hand spoke eloquently of her wants;—and all fraternizing together in the greatest apparent harmony, and enjoying the same degree of freedom, man and brute alike, in the most wretched attempt at human habitations which I ever yet beheld. Such is the distracting picture that presents itself in the interior of this once proud sanctuary of the Pharaohs.

The gigantic colonnade which we had beheld from the river consists in a double row of seven columns each, eleven feet and a half in diameter, covered with hieroglyphics and surmounted by capitals representing the leafy summit of the palm-tree. The quantity of sand and rubbish which more than a thousand years of abandonment has accumulated round the base of these pillars, has raised the level of the soil to about one half of their original height. This very much detracts from the harmony of their appearance, for they are now not sufficiently lofty for their bulk; but it is easy to imagine what must have been the noble symmetry of those columns when, free from the degrading encroachments which time and neglect had gathered round them, they stood proudly forth, unobstructed from base to

capital, a phalanx of colossi! But it was only when we had threaded our way through the labyrinth of huts and mangers which choke up the once fair proportions of this magnificent ruin, and had arrived at the northern extremity where the great entrance is situated, that we could form a just conception of the massive grandeur of the Temple of Luxor, or understand the precise nature of the old and genuine Egyptian architecture (by which I mean that of *the time of the Pharaohs*) as applied to sacred structures. There stands the great Propylon (two masses of stone in the form of truncated pyramids, covered with sculptured battle-scenes and hieroglyphics), flanking the great entrance gate, on each side of which is seated a colossal statue of granite now buried to the shoulders in rubbish, and bearing on their mutilated countenances traces of the Persian Conqueror's vain attempt to destroy the enduring work of Egyptian hands. Think of the awe which these mute memorials of races long since extinct must inspire, when one remembers that they have been *ruins* since the time of Cambyses, and have been seated unchanged there through long ages of change, as though watching for the return of their false gods to the sanctuary, while the Persian, and the Macedonian, and

the Roman, and the Saracen, and the Turk, have in turn overrun the land, each setting up a worship as false as their own. The mitre of a third colossus is just visible above the rubbish, on the right side of the propylon, in a line with the two others, thereby denoting that originally four of them had been placed before the entrance. A little in advance of them, and so situated as not to obstruct the view of this stupendous gateway and its silent sentinels, were the two famous obelisks of rose-coloured granite—the most beautiful that were ever constructed—one of which alone remains here, the other has been removed to a far different scene! This grand entrance faces the famous avenue of sphinxes which leads to the Temple of Karnak; but to Karnak we did *not* go—we would not mar the delight we anticipate in visiting that wondrous construction by seeing it in a hurried manner; and therefore we stopped short at the gate of the Temple of Luxor, and, without casting our eyes northward, resumed our voyage.

I know not whether I have succeeded in giving you any intelligible idea of what I saw at Luxor; but so anxious am I that you should understand all the ins and outs of an Egyptian temple (as it is certain that you will have to

read the details of a great many more of them before I have done with you), that I make no apology for herewith sending you Strabo's account of that description of edifice, for it conveys, together with a clear detail of its various parts, the technical terms by which those parts are distinguished.

"The arrangement of the parts of an Egyptian temple is as follows: In a line with the entrance into the sacred enclosure is a paved road, or avenue, about a hundred feet in breadth, or something less, and in length from three to four hundred feet, or even more. This is called the dromos. Through the whole length of the dromos, and on each side of it, sphinxes are placed, at the distance of thirty feet from one another, forming a double row, one on each side. After the sphinxes you come to a large propylon, and as you advance you come to another, and to a third after that; for no definite number either of propylæ or of sphinxes is required in the plan, but they vary in different temples as to their number, as well as to the length and breadth of the dromi. After the propylæ we come to the temple itself, which has always a large and handsome pronaos, or portico, and a sekos, or cella, of only

moderate dimensions, with no image in it, or, at least, not one of human shape, but some representation of a brute animal. On each side of the pronaos, and in front of it, are what are called the wings. These are two walls of equal height, but their width at the base is somewhat more than the breadth of the temple, measured along its basement line. This width of the wings, however, gradually diminishes from the bottom to the top, owing to the sides inclining inwards towards one another, up to the height of seventy-five or ninety feet. These walls have sculptured forms on them of a large size, like Tyrrhenian figures, and the very ancient Greek works of the same class. There is also a chamber with many pillars in a barbaric style, for, except that the pillars are large and numerous, and form many rows, there is nothing in them agreeable to the eye, or calculated to produce effect. They are specimens of much labour ill-bestowed."

Now, can you make something out of this description of the old Greek geographer? One thing, which he has omitted to specify, I must herewith add: the form of the propylon is invariably like that of the wings he has described, inclining inwards to the summit—a form pecu-

liar to old Egyptian architecture, the first principle of which appears to have been strength and stability.

The view through the sole remaining propylon at Luxor is obstructed by a shabby mosque, which has been constructed within what was once the peristyled court of the temple. As it was Friday, most of the male inhabitants of the place were at their devotions, and just as we were about to quit the scene, the whole congregation poured out of the mosque and surrounded us. Such a ragged miserable set of beings! their appearance quite harmonized with the Arab name of the place — *El Kusr* "the Ruins," which has been perverted by Europeans into Luxor.

We had been apprized that Signor Castellari, a Roman who resides at Luxor for the purpose of collecting antiquities, would soon make himself known to us, and we had also been cautioned about the prices he would ask us for his *objêts de curiosité;* so, thus forewarned, we deemed ourselves forearmed: but the wily Italian was too many for us—"he surrounded us," as an Irishman would say. First of all, he most courteously came to welcome us on shore, and then he very obligingly and cleverly

acted as *cicerone* through the ruins; a truly welcome service, for the Arab guide who conducted us was all but useless, although he had acquired the perfect pronunciation of a number of isolated English words and phrases connected with his profession. Thus he would pompously say, as he pointed out the object he named to us, "Sphinx," "Cartouche," "Obelisk all red granite," "Sandstone columns," "Turn to the right," "To the left," &c., &c.; but if we put a question to him, we found it vain to expect a connected or intelligible answer. But Signor Castellari was a friend in need on the occasion.

The temple being seen, he invited us to take coffee at his abode, (for he occupies the apartment constructed fifteen years ago among the ruins for Monsieur Lebas, the French engineer, who came out to Luxor to superintend the removal of the obelisk from its original position before the temple to the waterside, where the vessel that transported it to France was awaiting it); and that being disposed of, he commenced what I imagine to be his general plan of acting on similar occasions. Apropos to some remark made, he exhibits his antiquities without speaking of them as objects of commerce, and as he is displaying a mummy-

chest, or some scarabæus of the time of the Pharaohs, he begs your acceptance of some trifling article with such grace that a refusal would be impossible. *Then* he has you fast—you feel compelled to ask the price of some more important object, and to beat him down is no longer possible, for he has you in the cleft-stick of an obligation. However, in our case, I do not think that the plunder was very outrageous; I believe that he did not ask above six or seven times the amount of what he would have taken for the articles; and for a few pounds I certainly have procured souvenirs of the place which I would not relinquish for ten times what they have cost me.

Esneh, November 23.

Nothing of any note between Thebes and this place, which we reached in the middle of last night, and where we are compelled to remain four-and-twenty hours very much against our inclination, for we are thereby losing the advantage of a lovely breeze blowing right up the river, which is doubly provoking, as for some days a fair wind, or any wind at all, has been a rare occurrence. However, no option is left us of proceeding, for Esneh is the last place where we shall have an opportunity of fulfilling

our compact with the sailors, of giving them a day in order to bake their provision of bread for the remainder of the voyage; for it is strange, but true, that between this place and the second Cataract, no bread whatever is to be procured.

This morning we found our Dahabieh tied to the bank, the wretched mud town of Esneh overtopping us, a melancholy prospect for a delay of four-and-twenty hours, had we not known that the temple of Esneh was in the background, and would afford us interesting employment for part of the day. Although I have applied the term wretched to Esneh, it nevertheless enjoys the reputation of being a place of some consideration, for the Viceroy has a palace here which he occasionally visits, in order to enjoy the salubrious climate; and there is a considerable cotton-manufactory, under the direction of a Copt, which gives employment to a great number of people, and imparts something like an air of prosperity to the town. The bazaar also looks as if something was doing in it, and the market is very well-stocked, particularly with such fruit and vegetables as the season affords; I never saw such melons, both water and sweet melons, as at Esneh.

But now for the temple. Do you remember

the French caricature of an enthusiastic horticulturist doing the honours of his garden to an unlucky visitor, whose floral tastes were not such as to render the exhibition at all acceptable, and who, while expatiating aloud on the pleasure he is deriving from his host's minute explanations of everything, murmurs aside in a tone of despair, "*Mais il ne me fera pas grace d'un seul oignon!*" Make the application as I intend, and prepare yourself to act the victim's part, for be assured that I, in my turn, *ne vous ferai pas grace d'un seul temple!*"

And nothing that I have seen in all my travels ever appeared to me more sublime than the temple of Esneh — I ought to say that portion of it which remains standing; for that which, from its space, I at first supposed to be the temple itself, proved to be only the pronaos, or portico. Here we found none of those drawbacks which deface the general view of Luxor in the shape of Arab habitations incorporated with its stately columns. All is perfect — walls, roof, floor, — and no accumulation of sand to diminish the effect of the lofty pillars, of which there are twenty-four, disposed in four rows of six each, with capitals each differing from the other, being varia-

tions of either the lotus leaf, or the palm branch, bound together in a sort of sheaf; and yet, though dissimilar, producing no inharmonious effect. These pillars are about fifty feet high, admirably proportioned in their circumference, and are covered with hieroglyphics, and with the ovals, or cartouches, of several kings. The walls are sculptured all over with those strange devices peculiar to ancient Egyptian art, which leave one doubtful, at a first glance, whether they were intended for caricatures to amuse the multitude, or as mysterious symbols, whose meaning was confided to the initiated few alone. On the ceiling is to be seen the famous Zodiac—no, it is not to be seen, for we could not distinguish it in the twilight that reigns within—but there it is, or *was*—similar to the one at Dendera; and many are the travellers, and even men of science, whom this Zodiac has puzzled or misled as to the actual epoch of the construction of the Temple of Esneh. With this question my ignorance forbids me to meddle; all that I can aver is, that I returned to my boat perfectly intoxicated with the delight which a view of this splendid specimen of Egyptian architecture had occasioned me.

There, my first occupation was to see what Champollion said about it, when—judge of my mortification—I discovered that my enthusiasm had run riot *mal àpropos!* for instead of finding that my admiration was sanctioned by the judgment of that high-priest of hieroglyphics, I found that he declared Esneh to be of the lowest order of Egyptian temples—*enfin,* as they say in France, *c'est la petite bière!* What my unpractised eye had been revelling upon as the supposed ovals of the Thothmes, the Amenephons, and the Rhamses, Monsieur Champollion, who read those hieroglyphics as you and I would read the *Morning Post,* has pronounced to be those of Domitian, Trajan, Claudius, Titus, &c.; and all that is visible of Esneh to belong to "des temps modernes—un des monumens les plus récemment achevés,"—in short, a miserable modern item in the retrospect of ages that one has to deal with in this country, only dating from the time of the Roman domination, a paltry eighteen hundred years ago! So, you see, what his learning taught him to despise, my ignorance led me to delight in; and I much question whether any of the monuments of high antiquity that are before me, will occasion me more wonder

and gratification than I experienced this morning among the all-but-contemned columns of this work of "*modern times*."

I have been debating with myself before I sat down to write, whether it would not be allowable for me to attempt to cut a scientific figure with you, and, assuming a fastidious tone based upon a thorough knowledge of the subject, express myself contemptuously upon the decline of Egyptian art as visible in the sculptures of Esneh. But truth has prevailed over vanity, and I give you my impressions in all their honesty and all their ignorance. Keep them to yourself, however, for I do not say but that when I return home with my hieroglyphical education completed by the *running commentaries* I am now in the course of making through the land, I may not indulge in some superb disdain when speaking of the Egyptian temples constructed in the times of the Greek Ptolemies and the Roman Emperors; and getting *à cheval* upon my Pharaonic lore, turn up my nose knowingly at the degeneracy of art exhibited at Esneh and other edifices of the same date—so pray be discreet!

This evening a large shoal of crocodiles—at least twenty or thirty—swam past our boat, some of them of prodigious length, and all of them so

near the surface of the water that we could plainly discover their ugly forms. I am in hopes of being able to procure some crocodiles' eggs up the country to bring home as a curiosity.

Good night!

CHAPTER VIII.

PASSING GLIMPSES. — PREPARATIONS.—ES-SOUAN. — QUARRIES OF SYENE.— DESERT CEMETERY —THE BERBERS.—MIXED POPULATION. — PLEASURES OF POLYGAMY. — ELEPHANTINA. — THE FIRST CATARACT. — REIS HASSAN. — SUCCESS.— MAHATTA.— SLAVE BOAT.—VIEW OF PHILÆ.

Es-souan, Nov. 26, 1845.

On leaving Esneh our good wind again befriended us, and enabled us to scud swiftly along without stopping anywhere. We passed by the great Temple of Edfou, which is at some distance from the river on the western bank, and had a lovely view of its propylon just as the sun was setting behind it; but the temple itself we were unable to distinguish, perhaps from the circumstance of an Arab village occupying its roof! Edfou is reputed to be one of the most perfect specimens of an Egyptian temple extant, yet such are the uses—I ought rather to say abuses—to which these magnificent remains are put in this semi-barbarous country. On the same side of the Nile, but at some distance from Edfou, are the famous

quarries of Hagiar Silsileh, which furnished materials for so many of the monuments of Ancient Egypt; and further up, on the eastern bank, and within nine or ten hours of Es-souan, is the Temple of Koom Ombos, beautifully situated upon a rising ground overlooking the river.

At Edfou the castor-oil plant begins to be very abundant; its medicinal qualities are unknown to the natives of this country, but the women use the oil as a cosmetic, anointing their hair and skins with it in such quantities that the smell (which does not breathe of "Araby the Blest") renders their proximity intolerably offensive. The skins of the natives darken visibly on approaching the southern limits of Egypt, and here at Es-souan we have fallen in with a population completely distinct from the Fellah race.

We reached Es-souan so late at night as to be able to see nothing, but that was immaterial, as this being the place where the necessary arrangements for passing the First Cataract are made, the delay it involves has allowed us more than time sufficient to explore all that it contains of interest. The management of the Dahabieh is here to be transferred to the Reis of the Cataracts, a great official personage,

who furnishes a hundred men to assist in its passage through those somewhat perilous rapids; and our good and efficient Reis Ali is to be allowed literally to "rest upon his oars" until we get into smooth water again somewhere near the Island of Philæ. Mohammed, whose management in everything is above all praise, has made our compact with Reis Hassan (him of the Cataracts), which includes not only his services and those of "his good men and true" to bear us harmless up the first Cataract, but to bring us down again on our return; one half of the sum stipulated for, to be paid after the ascent, the other half, after the descent. Many travellers leave their Dahabiehs and carriages at Es-souan—the owners specifying in their contract that they are not to go beyond that place—and proceed by land above the Cataract, where they take a small boat of the country to perform the rest of the navigation upwards. But such a plan entails so much trouble and discomfort, (for every article of furniture and provisions must be transported from your own boat to the new conveyance, which is invariably overrun with vermin and insects of all descriptions), that it is always to be avoided when possible; and as Mr. Walne has

allowed us the option of taking his Dahabieh up the *First Cataract*, we gladly profit by the permission to proceed without a change of conveyance to the end of our voyage.

Es-souan, the Syene of the ancients, formed the southern limit of the Roman empire; for beyond this place and its adjacent islands of Elephantina and Philæ, they did not attempt to extend their conquest. The ruins of a Saracen town which was depopulated by the plague in the middle ages, crown a rocky eminence over the river, and impart an air of sadness and desolation to the place. Here the Nile completely changes its usual physiognomy; no longer a broad flood calmly rolling its waters through flat monotonous banks, it here takes a bend, and narrowed and hemmed in between granite mountains, it rushes rapidly through a rocky channel studded with little islets of red granite and black basalt, and assumes the character of lake scenery. The Nubian frontier, on the eastern side, is close to the town, and on the west it is at once gained by crossing over to the Island of Elephantina, just opposite, and only a few hundred yards distant from Es-souan.

Placing ourselves under the guidance of a

native *cicerone*, a portly Hadgee, named Mohammed Hassan, who speaks just enough Italian to make himself useful in such a capacity, we set out upon asses to the Eastern Desert to visit those wonderful granite quarries—the quarries of Syene!—from whence were cut the obelisks that four thousand years ago adorned the cities of Thebes, Memphis, and Heliopolis —those precious monuments of a civilization which preceded by tens of centuries the civilization of the rest of the world! Strange to say, so few of these obelisks have been suffered to remain in Egypt, that Rome alone is richer in them than the whole land of the Pharaohs from the Delta to the Cataracts. Uncared for and unvalued here, those beautiful pillars form the pride and the ornament of foreign capitals—truly may the saying be applied to them of a prophet not being honoured in his own country! Through the drifting sands we could plainly distinguish the beds from which those vast monoliths had been cut; but how they could be so cleanly cut, and how raised, was by no means so plain to our comprehension. One unfinished obelisk lies there just as it was abandoned, (who shall say how many ages ago?) and, save that it has been

cracked through, looking so fresh that one might fancy it was only awaiting the arrival of the workmen to remove it to the place where the sculptor's cunning hand was to cover it with pictured chronicles. And what has become of the strong hands that hewed that vast mass out of the imperishable rock, and the delicate fingers that were to beautify it, and the mind that could will shapeless stones to be fashioned into forms of beauty?—into what elements have they resolved themselves, while there lies their work, unchanged and unchangeable?

In the part of the Desert we rode through to reach the quarries, is the old burying-place of the ruined Saracen town I have already alluded to, full of crumbling tombs and dilapidated monuments—a dreary scene! how unlike those green and shady nooks, where, in the quiet village cemeteries of dear England, "the rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep" under the shadow of the old church wall! And yet, methinks, the Desert, which is the image of death, is no unfit locality for a receptacle of the dead.

On our way home to our boat we rode through the bazaar of Es-souan, which, although the reverse of brilliant in point of merchandize, was

interesting to us from the novel scene it exhibited in the mixed population assembled there. At this point, the physical characteristics of the people rapidly approach the Negro races, but there is an intermediate race called the Berbers, inhabiting Lower Nubia, (among whom we shall find ourselves as soon as we quit Essouan,) whose language and physiognomy are as distinct from the Arabs as they are from the Negroes. Many of these Berbers we found in the bazaar, a fine wild-looking people; the men, with very little clothing, all carry a small dagger, strapped with a red leather bracelet round their left arm above the elbow, and a *fetiche* or talisman enclosed in a little red leather case suspended to the other. The women uncover their faces and wear nose rings of brass or of bone, and a quantity of necklaces and bracelets of coloured beads, brass ear-rings and finger-rings, and, when they can procure them, small gold or silver coins hung upon their foreheads. The married women wear long drawers and a large blue cotton cloth similar to the garment of the female Fellahs, which they drape not ungracefully around them. They disfigure themselves by not only tattooing their chins, but by dyeing their under lips with some blue drug which

produces a doubly disagreeable effect, that of ghastliness, and of swelling the lip even beyond the thick proportions which nature has bestowed upon it. The young girls wear nothing except a girdle of fringes composed of thin leather thongs, ornamented at the top with cowrie-shells, which is fastened round their loins, and so ingeniously is this description of Eve's apron contrived, that no immodest exposure ever takes place. They are all exceedingly well limbed,—indeed so are all the Fellahs —and it is a remarkable fact that since I have been in Egypt I have never seen a deformed person among its natives. Here too we saw the two Abyssinian races, the black and the copper-coloured specimens; and the fierce Bedouin Arab with his head uncovered and exhibiting a shock of black hair standing on end, with a skewer stuck through it, and thick enough to protect his skull from the ardent rays of the sun.

Passing by a door at which several women were standing, my guide requested me to dismount and visit his family. I went in and found his two wives, seven children, sister, mother, and mother-in-law amicably assembled in the same habitation, and was hospitably regaled by them

with fresh dates. The women were tattooed, befringed, and beringed as I have above described; the little children terrified at the appearance of the first white face they had ever seen, set up a deafening squall, and could not be persuaded to approach me. I dare say that henceforward, whenever they are naughty, they will be threatened with a visit from the *White Woman*, just as children in England are menaced by their nurses, when unmanageable, with the *Black Man.*

As I rode away, I asked the Hadgee how he contrived to keep the peace between his two wives, and whether there were not occasionally jealousies to disturb his tranquillity? He naïvely answered, "*very often*, for whenever I pay more attention to one than to the other, the neglected one is sure to pick a quarrel with her rival—and then," he added philosophically, "I go out and leave them to fight it out by themselves, telling them when I return, that nothing makes a woman look so ugly in her husband's eyes, as putting herself in a passion—and that is the only notice I ever take of their quarrels."

"But," said I, "if you would content yourself with one wife, all such jealousies would be out of the question."

This was a reasoning he did not appear at all disposed to adopt; and indeed, on returning to the boat, I found from Mohammed that the Hadgee is quite a Blue Beard, and although he does not cut off his wives' heads, he has taken advantage of the extraordinary facility afforded to all classes for divorce in this country, to cut the marriage knot whenever it pleases him, and has taken unto himself sixteen or seventeen wives already! On dismissing him I gave him some gilt ear-rings (from a provision I brought out with me for the Nubian women) for his Statira and Roxana; and he was just petitioning for some oranges on the plea that one of his wives was unwell, when he was interrupted by Mohammed, who put him a little out of countenance by exclaiming, "What? is your wife not cured yet?" and then, turning to me, added, "I have been eight or ten years going with travellers to Es-souan, and every time I get here Hadgee Hassan has a sick wife who wants oranges to cure her!"

Later in the day we crossed over to Elephantina, that highly—indeed too highly—praised island; for I confess that, in a picturesque point of view, I could not discover grounds for the extravagant encomiums bestowed upon it by some

travellers. Its antiquities are another question, albeit they have dwindled into a poor and beggarly account of broken stones; but from the highly coloured description of it given by Lord Lindsay, who is not only an accurate observer, but a conscientious describer, and who complacently dwells upon it as "the lovely Island of Flowers," I *did* expect something far more smiling than I found. Verdure there certainly is, but not a single blossom could I discover.

Elephantina contains a colossal statue of Sesostris (Rhamses the Great), seated in the midst of a wilderness of stones and broken pottery, the features much defaced, and looking altogether the fit monarch of such a scene of loneliness and ruin. There is also the door of an Egyptian temple, formed of large masses of rose granite, and bearing an inscription to Alexander, the son of the Macedonian conqueror; but no other part of the edifice remains. The Greeks and Romans have both left traces here of their domination, in the shape of a Nilo-meter, with the remains of a causeway, and of baths, &c., &c.; but there is not a single structure left standing; and violence and ruin have done their worst in sweeping away all that once adorned the island. Two temples at Elephantina

were demolished for the sake of their materials, in order to construct barracks for the black regiments which Mohammed Ali organized under the direction of Suleiman Pasha (Colonel Seve), after the expedition of Ishmael Pasha into Nubia and Senaar.

We were quickly beset by a crowd of naked Nubian children, with little fragments of antiquities, Egyptian agates (for which Elephantina is famous), necklaces such as are worn by the women here, and those pretty baskets manufactured by them out of palm leaves, for sale; and we made them very happy by purchasing almost all their stock in trade.

In the First Cataract, Nov. 21.

Well! going up the Cataracts is no easy business, I assure you; indeed I wonder that it is effected so often, and that accidents so seldom occur; and I can now perfectly understand why the proprietors of Dahabiehs at Cairo stipulate that Es-souan is to be the utmost limit to which their boats are to proceed. We, however, were privileged by Mr. Walne to pass the First Cataract in the Swift, of course paying all the extra expenses entailed by that operation; and I have already told you that Mohammed had lost no time in settling all preliminaries with the Reis

of the Cataract for his attendance, and that of as many men as he should require on the occasion. We had been told that a strong wind was necessary to carry us through, as for the greater part of the way tracking is out of the question; and that travellers are frequently delayed for days and weeks, awaiting that indispensable auxiliary. But on the morning after our arrival at Es-souan, the auspicious wind set in, and everything augured a prosperous ascent. At ten o'clock yesterday morning, the Reis of the Cataract took possession of the Dahabieh with twenty of his men (as many as we could well accommodate in addition to our own crew, the remaining eighty being sent on to the point where their services would be more immediately required), and we started with all our sails set, and quickly left the town of Es-souan behind us.

And soon the wildness of the Cataract burst upon us in all its splendour; after the tame scenery which characterises the banks of the Nile from Alexandria to Es-souan, it was quite refreshing to our eyes to rest upon something rugged, and differing in form from the eternal *dhorra* fields and palm-trees. The commencement of the Cataract presents a complete Archi-

pelago of granite rocks, some red, others black, and shining in the sun, as though highly polished, with various torrents rushing between them in all directions. These rocks are of the most extraordinary forms; now awful, now grotesque, they look as old as the earth itself—the skeletons of the antediluvian world! On the western shore the sands of the Great Desert, yellow as gold, and rippled by the action of the winds into wavelets, descend to the water's edge interspersed with great masses of black basalt; on the east, rock rises above rock of granite, piled up in such strange and uncouth forms, that one is led to attribute to some terrific volcanic eruption,—to one of those early revolutions of the elements which changed the surface of the globe, the creation of that chaotic wilderness. The breeze held strong; and well it was that it did so, for I cannot conceive how destruction could be avoided, if, for one moment, the impelling power should be overcome by the resistance of the torrent we were driven through. Here and there our course lay between rocks narrowing so closely together, and towering to such a height, that the wind was momentarily taken out of our sails, and, I assure you, such moments were awful, for it was just a struggle whether

the impetus with which we entered the narrow pass would carry us through it or not. And often there was a momentary pause, when that struggle rendered the boat stationary, while the sails fluttered like an expiring pulse; — but again the breeze filled them, and the screams and shouts of the two crews would be converted into an hurrah of confidence and triumph. At each of those intervals, our good Reis Ali would leave his post at the prow of the vessel, in order to give me assurances of safety, and encourage me with a cheerful "*Taieeb Taieeb!*" (very well, very good,) by which kind process I became convinced, that not only had we already encountered some danger, but that more lay before us—a conviction but too well founded, as you will soon see.

I had established for myself a test of the safety of our progress, which inspired me with more confidence than the friendly visits of Reis Ali; and this was our excellent cook, Hadgee Mustapha, whose little portable kitchen, in which he performs such great feats, is placed just opposite to the awning where I was standing. There he was, fixed to his post, and, in the midst of the deafening noise and bustle around, imperturbably making preparations for dinner, which I began to think it doubtful that we should ever eat.

But his unruffled *sang froid*, satisfied me that he, who is a Nile bird, thought that there was no danger; and, in my fancied security, I lost sight of the fact that as a Moslem and a Fatalist,—above all, as a cook,—he was in religion and honour bound to show an immovable countenance—to leave the boat to its fate, and to stick to his *casseroles*, and snap his fingers at the Cataracts.

Thus matters stood at noon; and, in reply to the anxious inquiries I addressed to Mohammed, he declared that we should soon arrive at that part of the Cataract called the *Bab*, or gate, where the eighty men were stationed to track the boat up the rapids; and, that operation once achieved, half an hour would bring us to the island of Philæ, where all our troubles would be over. Scarcely had he made me that assurance, when the Swift entered one of those short but furious torrents, through which the practicable channel lies. A scene of general confusion ensued; I heard the voice of every man of the two crews screaming in angry vociferation, and the hoarse shouts of the Reis loud above the rest,—I saw Mohammed draw his sabre, and rush towards the spot where the Reis of the Cataract's pilot was stationed. I was immediately conscious that our onward course was not only arrested,

but that we were retrograding; for the surrounding rocks, which, but an instant before, we were rapidly passing by, now appeared to be running away from us ahead. I looked up, and saw the sails trembling;—I looked forward, and oh, *comble de déséspoir!* beheld the cook drop a pudding-mould from his hand, and, seizing one of the poles which the crew employed to prevent the vessel wearing round, go heartily to work with the rest. All is lost, thought I, since Hadgee Mustapha abandons his pudding! The next moment a hollow, grating noise was heard, and my sinister apprehensions were confirmed;—the boat had struck;—luckily, it was by the stern, which held her fast, and prevented her swinging round with her broadside upon the rocks, where she must have been dashed to pieces. The necessary precautions for such a casualty had been provided, and two of our men instantly threw themselves into the stream, and swam to an adjoining rock with ropes, which they made fast there, and thus established such a *fulcrum* to pull upon, as secured her from swinging round by the head. Meanwhile, the pilot who had been provided by the Reis of the Cataract, and whose negligent steering had brought us to this perilous pass, abandoned the helm, and jumping into the

river, swam over to the eastern shore, and made his escape into the Desert.

While we were lying in this predicament, every bump which the keel gave against the rocks sounding like death knocking at the door, all the surrounding rocks suddenly swarmed with naked Nubians, who sprang up like Roderick Dhu's men from what, but an instant before, appeared but a lifeless solitude. On such occasions, I understand, those people always lie in wait and present themselves at the critical moment, either to obtain a *bachshish*, if assistance be possible, or to assume the character of wreckers if misfortune is inevitable. Many of them approached the Dahabieh, seated upon trunks of trees, and using their hands as paddles, the common mode of crossing the river adopted by this primitive race; but we rejected their services, having as many hands on board as we required. At last by dint of the greatest exertion we were got off the rock that held us by the stern, but alas! it was to fall from Scylla to Charybdis—for before we could once more get headway upon the boat, she struck again, and this time she sprung a leak. There was nothing to be done but to run her upon the sands of an adjacent island, and to send to the nearest village for

workmen to come and repair the mischief done; we then arranged ourselves for the remainder of the day and night. For the honour and credit of Hadgee Mustapha, I must tell you that our dinner betrayed no symptoms of the confusion and terror that had presided over its arrangements; and that his pudding, notwithstanding the ominous interruption that it had encountered, was one of the very best he ever concocted.

Mahatta, December 1.

Two days have now elapsed since I broke off at our *break down* in the Cataract. I then told you that the difficulties had surpassed my anticipation, and I was flattering myself with the idea that the worst had been overcome, when, in reality, the worst was still to come. Even when I left off writing I thought that what was before us was like unto that which we had passed—but it turned out that close to the little island where we had been run ashore to get the leak stopped, is the key of the Cataract—the perilous part of the undertaking—and that the passage from Es-souan to that spot had been merely the Prologue to the Play—something that was to give us a foretaste of what was to follow. From that point, those who intend to ascend the Cataract must choose between two

formidable passes called Gates (Bab), one of which is quite a waterfall, and of terrific force, but by far the shortest to overcome (there it was Mohammed Ali, in defiance of the advice of his European engineers, sacrificed a steamboat in trying to pass it, with the assistance of five hundred men); the other is less perilous, but more protracted, and is liable to the want of water sufficient for the passage of larger craft. The repairs of our boat being completed the day before yesterday, a consultation was held early in the morning, and the Reis of the Cataract inclined to the latter of these passes; but previously to deciding, we were called upon for an opinion —(I, who had never heard of either until within hearing of their roar!)—and taken to see both; of course I gave my voice for the quietest looking one.

Thither then we proceeded, but I shall not weary you with an account of our defeat. Suffice it to say, we got fairly grounded in the first rapid for want of water, and after four mortal hours passed in strenuous but ineffectual efforts to get our boat over this difficulty, we were compelled to desist, and to drop down the stream to the island we had that morning left. This was discouraging indeed, but we were not to

be daunted by such a check; there was still another passage to attempt, and attempt it we would! And should that too fail, it would then be time enough to talk of returning to Es-souan and turning our backs upon the Cataracts.

But the day was too far advanced to commence fresh operations at the other gate; besides, Mohammed had misgivings about the Reis of the Cataract having furnished men enough to carry us through the difficult pass before us. He therefore set off by land to Es-souan, and represented the affair to the Turkish governor there, Suleiman Effendi, who, as soon as he heard of the accident that had happened to English travellers, wrote a letter to the Reis of the Cataract, ordering him to convey the English Consul's boat in safety through the Cataract, and to take two hundred men, if necessary, to effect the operation. Before Mohammed quitted Es-souan, Suleiman Effendi had imprisoned the unlucky pilot who had caused our first disaster; he also sent his own Ghawass back with Mohammed to see that his orders were attended to; and this man, as well as Mohammed, talked very seriously of hanging four of the Reis of the Cataracts' assistants, should our last efforts fail.

To ensure success it was deemed advisable to

empty our boat of everything, take out her ballast, strike her masts and yards, in short, render her quite a shell; and, as items in the heavy and useless lumber, we of course left the Dahabieh, and became spectators of what took place from the shore.

As I am quite sure that it is impossible to give you a clear idea in writing of the gate through which our boat was about to be passed, I shall not attempt it. Besides, I must have wearied you so completely with a detail of our failures, that I shall be more summary in the account of our success; and all that I shall say is, that, perched upon a rock overlooking the whole scene, we witnessed the struggling passage of the Dahabieh up the Cataract, and the various "hair-breadth scapes" she encountered. How the whole thing was effected, I can scarcely now understand; it was all such a scene of noise, and movement, and fearful excitement! Suffice it to say, that at the very moment when we believed the Swift to be safe through her troubles, the greatest peril was incurred, and it was then that the great exertions of Reis Hassan of the Cataracts were put forth. Stripped of everything save his drawers, his turban even thrown aside, and the long Mussulman tuft of hair that

crowns his shaven head, floating like a horse-tail in the wind, he had, from the commencement, held himself prepared not merely to direct by his judgment the evolutions of his men, but to enforce by his example any personal risk that might be required of them. I never saw anything finer or, I will even say, more terrifically striking than the appearance of this man, wound up to a state of excitement which betrayed itself in the most fiery and picturesque gestures, in vociferations which were wonderful even for an Arab, and in a play of countenance which at times imparted to him the appearance of a demoniac. He was here, there, and everywhere! now in the bark, now on a clump of rocks in the rapids, now on shore pulling with his men at the rope which impelled the Dahabieh forward. When at moments the force of the opposing current drove her backwards, and she was all but dashed upon the rocks, Reis Hassan would stoop to the ground, and gathering a handful of dust, scatter it before him—the Arab gesture of rage and imprecation—then, with frantic signs and exclamations, direct either the tightening or the relaxing of the impelling rope, which would be answered by a cry from the line of men straining at it, and either a cheer or a yell from the

crew on board, headed by Mohammed, who never quitted her, and toiled like a slave in aiding the manœuvres. At last, at the moment the Swift was about to emerge from the last rapid, she bore down so closely upon a projecting corner of rock round which she was to be tracked, as almost to get her head entangled there. The moment was a dreadful one, for we looked upon her as lost; but the presence of mind of Reis Hassan, so truly admirable in that critical moment, saved her. He flew to the stern of the boat and fastened a rope there, then taking the extremity of it between his teeth, he sprang into the torrent, and swam to one of the rocks which were immediately behind the boat, and making it fast there, established a tension on the stern similar to that on the head. Then causing the head-rope to be immediately slackened, the operation of the pull upon the stern-rope was to extricate the Dahabieh's prow from the rock; and that accomplished, a strenuous pull from the shore caused her to shoot forward and clear the corner, and she rode triumphantly into smooth water. Such a cheer as burst forth from all hands! We hastened down from our elevated position to that part of the shore nearest to the boat, and were there met by the two Reis's and Mohammed, who grasped

our hands in the excess of their exultation at having thus surmounted all our difficulties; and in less than an hour everything was replaced in the Swift, and we were progressing towards Mahatta, where we anchored for the night.

This is a little port close to the island of Philæ, and is the place from whence travellers who have left their Dahabiehs at Es-souan, and have avoided the Cataract by going round by land, take a smaller boat for the rest of the voyage up the river— a plan undoubtedly involving less risk, but which I rejoice not to have adopted, as it would have precluded our seeing the First Cataract, which certainly surpasses every other part of the Nile in a picturesque point of view, and equals in wild and rugged boldness any river scenery that I have ever seen in any part of the world. The Cataracts of the Danube, the famous Eisen-Thor, are not to be compared to it, although flowing through a far more romantic and beautiful country.

Shortly after our arrival at Mahatta, a large boat came alongside of us laden with slaves, on their way from Kordafar and Sennaar to Cairo. They had been taken as *soi-disant* prisoners of war, and are the property of Mohammed Ali, to whom they are now being conveyed

under the escort of three or four Egyptian soldiers. There were about seventy of them, but to call them *prisoners of war* is preposterous, the greater part being women with infants at their breasts, probably the result of some *raid*, or *razzia*, which has swept away into slavery the whole population of a wretched village. The appearance of these poor creatures was truly miserable; besides their natural ugliness, (being the blackest and most hideous race of negroes) they bore the traces of wretchedness and privation legibly stamped upon their projecting bones and attenuated forms. Huddled together at the bottom of the boat, where they were packed as closely together as sheep in a pen, they did not exchange a word, even with each other,—they appeared quite brutified,—insensible even of the treatment to which they are victims. When they were marched out of the boat, (for, to avoid the trouble of taking them down the Cataract, they are to proceed by land to Es-souan, there to be reshipped for Cairo,) we sent Mohammed to buy them a good meal of dates, and for ten piastres,—about two shillings,—he brought back as much as two men could carry. We distributed them in equal portions among the poor creatures; but, although they ate them like people who had been hunger-

ing for a length of time, they evinced no semblance of satisfaction, or even thankfulness, for what they had received—they are evidently as insensible to kindness as to ill-treatment, and appear to be as inferior in their moral as in their physical organization to the Caucasian races.

So near Philæ, the sacred island of the ancient Egyptians, the burial place of their principal deity, Osiris, we could not resist obtaining a better view of it than Mahatta affords; so we rowed there in what Mohammed calls "*the jelly boat.*" But we did not land—we only contemplated its beautiful ruins by starlight, and you can conceive nothing more resplendent than the starlight here, and nothing more solemn and mysterious than the appearance of these old Egyptian temples seen by such a light. Then we returned to our Dahabieh, and I am winding up the day's employment by finishing my letter to you. When it may reach you, it is impossible to say, as I am now beyond all direct channels of communication with the civilized world, and must depend upon some chance meeting farther up the country to get my letters conveyed to Cairo. I shall close this, however, in order that it may be in readiness,—and so, Adieu!

CHAPTER IX.

PROGRESS UP THE RIVER. — NUBIAN SCENERY. — KOROSKO. — COURSE OF THE NILE.—TAXATION.—A BATTLE-ROYAL—IBRIM.

Wadi Halfa, Dec. 10, 1845.

Ten days have elapsed since the closing date of my last letter, (which I found an opportunity of forwarding to you on the 6th inst., from Korosko, where we met with a French gentleman in the Viceroy's service, who kindly undertook to have it conveyed to Cairo with his own dispatches), since which, nothing of interest has occurred in any shape. We quitted Mahatta early on the morning of the 2nd, and in pursuance of our plan quietly progressed in our course up the Nile without halting to visit any of the Nubian temples that are scattered along its banks. On the 3rd we entered the Tropic of Cancer, at Kalabshi, and found ourselves in the Torrid Zone; the weather, although extremely warm, by no means oppressive, and the climate so delicious as even

to surpass that of Egypt. On the 5th the scenery on each side of the Nile began to assume a very picturesque appearance—mountainous and almost Alpine in its character to the east; on the opposite bank, the eternal desert, whose golden sands there form themselves into all sorts of fantastic *mamelons;* and the river's edge on either side fringed with the castor oil-plant, and the prickly mimosa upon which the patient camel browses with delight. Long plantations of date and doum palms tower above, the fruit of which forms all the riches, and the chief sustenance of the poor Nubians, among whom *bread* is an unknown luxury. Every now and then we stopped at some wretched village for milk, eggs, and poultry; but how in a country so destitute of resource, Mohammed contrives to maintain the Commissariat as he does, is a matter of astonishment to me. Not only do we want for nothing, but he even manages to surprise us with little luxuries prepared by his own hand, in the shape of European confectionery, which he has learned to make in the course of his travels, and which are beyond the scope of Hadgee Mustapha's Oriental science.

On the evening of the 6th we reached Korosko and anchored for the night. The river there turns short to the west as far as Derr, the capital

of Nubia, and this abrupt angle forms a large basin, apparently closed in on all sides by lofty hills, which gives to that part of the Nile where Korosko is situated a great resemblance to the Lake of Neufchâtel. At Korosko we found Monsieur d'Arnault, the French gentleman I have already alluded to, who has been for nine years in the Viceroy's service as Civil Engineer, the last three of which he has lived entirely on the Nile in his Kangia. As soon as we anchored under the lofty bank upon which Korosko stands, he sent to ask permission to pay us a visit, and we immediately invited him to take tea with us. Monsieur d'Arnault is the third European we have met since our departure from Cairo, now nearly four weeks ago; and we are the only Europeans he has seen for many months, so you may imagine that we were as welcome as a file of newspapers to him, as we were able to give him much later intelligence from Paris than he had had an opportunity of receiving through any other medium since he has been in Nubia. He, on his part, gave us many interesting details of the various voyages of scientific discovery he has made in the Pasha's service in quest of mines, &c., &c.

Monsieur d'Arnault is now stationed at Koros-

ko for the accomplishment of a military road from thence through the Eastern Desert to Mograt, an operation intended to abridge the *détour* made by the retrograde course of the Nile, which takes a sudden bend at Old Dongola, and runs northward back as far as Mograt, where it again returns to its southern direction. Should this be accomplished, the formation of a road of about eighty leagues would overcome more than three times that distance of river, and, still better, all the upper cataracts would be avoided. The road itself would be easily effected, as the sand of the Eastern Desert is of a resisting nature, (the reverse of the beautiful yellow sands on the African side, which are so shifting as to render it impossible to do anything with them), but as yet Monsieur d' Arnault has failed in his endeavours to sink Artesian wells—the great desideratum in the undertaking—as a provision of water is indispensable for the support of the troops. The only substitute for these wells will be to construct cisterns for rain water; but in a country where it has not rained for *five years*, it is almost absurd to have recourse to such an expedient. Mohammed Ali, however, who is a very Turk, and cannot, or *will not*, understand any opposition to his behests —even when they come to him in the shape of

obstacles of nature's own creating, which are not to be surmounted by the science of man—does not appear to yield to his Engineer's views of the business; so here Monsieur d'Arnault remains, with a large detachment of Egyptian soldiers commanded by a Turkish field-officer at his orders, to execute whatever works he may trace out for them. These men are encamped at Korosko, and their white tents overshadowed by lofty palm-trees, form a pleasing variety to the eternal mud huts of the inhabitants of the banks of the Nile.

Monsieur d'Arnault has penetrated further south into this part of Africa than, perhaps, any other European traveller, having been sent by Mohammed Ali in whatever direction he imagined mines might be discovered. With that object in view, he followed the course of the White Nile until its trace became lost in impracticable marshes, and reached the spot where he says the Mountains of the Moon are erroneously placed in the maps; then taking a southerly direction he got as far as the fourth degree of latitude. From thence he returned through Abyssinia and joined the Blue Nile branch, and he spoke in admiration and respect of all that Bruce — that most calumniated of all travellers — wrote of that

country, attesting his veracity, and declaring from his own experience that his book is the best one of reference to which any traveller in Abyssinia can have recourse. Monsieur d'Arnault's account of the varieties of the human race that he met with in the course of his travels, was most interesting. As he proceeded southward from the White Nile, he found the country become more wretched and inappropriate to cultivation, and in the same proportion the human race has degenerated there down to its lowest level. And again as the country improves, he observed that mankind ascended in the scale of moral and physical qualifications, and even the colour became less intensely black. The account he gives is melancholy, of the way in which Mohammed Ali grinds down the populations of the countries under his dominion, and of the blind policy that leads him to drive them to despair and destruction in order to extort from them the taxes to which he has rendered them liable. If no money is to be obtained from them, their property is seized; if no property exists, the Viceroy's agents fall upon the nearest relations of the defaulter: in short, the system amounts to one of extermination, and fully—I cannot say *satisfactorily*—explains the visible decrease of population that

every year takes place in Egypt and its dependencies. It is a rare occurrence to meet with a very old person in this part of the world; yet the climate is so salubrious that sickness is almost unknown; and the plague even, while it has so often ravaged Egypt, has never penetrated into Nubia. The people here are only liable to *one* complaint, but it is a fatal one; for as Monsieur d' Arnault affectingly observed, they do not die of sickness, or of old age—they die of starvation!

Early on the morning of the 7th we left Korosko. While our men were tracking beyond Derr, they trampled down some patches of lupines and vetches which occupied the path they were obliged to take; the country people fell foul of them in consequence, and a battle-royal would have ensued had not Mohammed flown to the rescue. Mounted on the shoulders of two of our Arabs, he was borne through the water to the shore, flourishing his terrible courbash, and promising all the delinquents at the top of his voice that they should presently "eat stick" in a greater quantity than they had ever yet done; while Hadgee Mustapha, the cook, not to be outdone in valour, jumped upon a third man's back, and was carried on shore also, brandishing a long stick which had been destined for his kitchen-

fire, but which he seized upon in the absence of all more warlike weapons. It is astonishing what a moral effect was instantaneously produced by the appearance of these two great personages! The enemy, who had shown every determination to resist to the death our half-naked Arabs, fled like lightning before the terrors of the Dragoman's tarbouche and the cook's turban; so the battle was won without a blow, and the two heroes, who literally "came, and saw, and conquered," returned covered with bloodless laurels, the cook brandishing two sticks instead of one, he having picked up his trophy on the field of battle, where it had been thrown by one of the routed enemy in his haste to escape.

On the 8th we passed by Ibrim, interesting as being supposed to be the Primmis of the ancients, the utmost point to which the Romans ever penetrated in this country, and the town which Petronius, the Prefect of Egypt under Augustus, occupied by a Roman garrison after his successful expedition against Candace, Queen of the Ethiopians. This was the only attempt of the Romans to pursue their conquests into Nubia, and even then the occupation was not adopted in the spirit of territorial aggrandisement, but as a measure of self-defence—a means of repulsing

the aggressions of the Ethiopian Queen. Candace had taken advantage of the Roman Legions being withdrawn from the Thebaid and sent upon an expedition into Arabia, to march her army upon Syene (Es-souan), and destroy the garrisons of Philæ and Elephantina; this it was that induced Petronius to carry the war into her dominions, where her inexperienced troops not being able to withstand the discipline of the Legions, she was forced to fly into the fastnesses of her own country, and take refuge at Naputa. Petronius left an army at Primmis to keep her in check, but the occupation of that place was subsequently relinquished, from the impossibility of any advantage being derived from so remote a settlement, and the difficulty of maintaining a sufficient garrison there. It is admirably situated on the summit of a rock rising perpendicularly from the river, and in the absence of artillery must have been impregnable.

The place is now abandoned and quite a mass of ruins, but Ibrim has been the theatre of modern warfare, for the Viceroy's son, Ibrahim Pasha, took up his position there when, in pursuit of the Memlooks, he drove them out of Egypt. He was there besieged by them for several months, during which time his troops

were occasionally reduced to great hardships whenever the Memlooks intercepted the arrival of provisions from the other side of the river. However, he was ultimately relieved by a force coming from Lower Egypt, which raised the siege, and the Memlooks took their definitive departure for Dongola, where, after murdering the native sovereign, they established themselves. It was after this successful campaign against them that the residue of their body who remained in different parts of Egypt received Mohammed Ali's permission to return to Cairo, where, as I have already related to you, they were sacrificed to his cold-blooded policy.

The women in this part of Nubia uncover their faces, and wear cotton drawers fastened at the ankle; the girls, until they are marriageable, nothing but the girdle of leathern fringes I have already described to you. Their hair is separated into innumerable meshes, each of which is twisted round a thin piece of tightly curled wood-shaving, and *never undone or combed!* These spirals are steeped in castor oil, upon which the dust collects and remains until it is washed off by a fresh application of grease; being very profuse and cut square at the bottom, these Nubian *coiffures* of twisted hair look exactly like enor-

mous wigs. The men are all armed with long spears; hand-clubs made of wood beautifully polished and as hard as iron, called Abanos; long straight swords of a peculiar form widening towards the point, slung over their back; small knives buckled round their left arm; and large round bucklers with a boss in the middle, covered either with crocodile's skin or hippopotamus's hide. They are a fine, handsome, manly-looking race, and, although exceedingly dark, have nothing of the negro in them—on the contrary, their heads are very finely formed, and present what phrenologists would term "well balanced crania."

The hills on the western side of the river, from Korosko to Wadi Halfa, are of the most whimsical shape you can conceive; a caprice of Nature, who, after having created such endless tracts of monotonous sands, indulged herself in producing the contrast of these extraordinary elevations. Many of them are so exactly pyramidical in their appearance, that at first I believed they must have been constructions, instead of natural mounds. Might not the form of these hills have originally suggested the idea of adopting a similar one in architecture?

On the 9th we passed the two temples of Ib-

samboul, and as the breeze was both brisk and fair, we would not tarry, but contented ourselves for the moment with a passing *coup d'œil* of their stupendous façades cut out of the living rock, (for those far-famed sanctuaries of the Egyptian deities are excavations and not constructions). Four sitting giants guard the portals of the great temple, and six standing figures of smaller dimensions, but still colossal, those of the lesser one. The appearance of those gigantic sculptures in this far solitude, surrounded and surmounted by the rude rock of which they form a part, is truly extraordinary. Around them nothing is to be seen but the barren sands of the desert, before them the ever-flowing river! No city could ever have existed on this spot. What manner of people were they, who could have prodigally created such magnificent efforts of human labour and art in such a solitude?

This morning, the 10th of December, and exactly one month since our departure from Cairo, we anchored at Wadi Halfa, the extreme point of our peregrinations, and the threshold as it were, of the Second Cataract. We have now followed the course of the Nile for a thousand miles from Alexandria to this place, and not one tributary stream has fallen into the great river during

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the whole of that distance; its "blessed waters" rolling onward through the long valley they fertilize, have remained pure from all contact or fusion with meaner streams; like the Great Creator at whose command its waters sprang forth from their yet undiscovered sources, the Nile is *alone* in its bounty; inexhaustible in its beneficence, it gives all, dispensing riches, prosperity, life, whithersoever it goes, and receives nothing in return!

It happens that to day is the great Mahometan festival of the Courbairam, or commemoration of the sacrifice made by Abraham of a ram instead of his son—(*Ishmael*, according to the Moslem belief). The followers of the Prophet keep this festival rigorously, and at the same time with all the rejoicings that attend on Christmas with us; and all those who can afford it kill a sheep with their own hand before their own door, and distribute the flesh to the poor. The individual who kills and gives the sheep is precluded from partaking of its flesh. Mohammed, who is a very good Moslem, purchased a sheep at his own expense this morning, which he slew with his own hand at sunrise, reciting at the same time the prescribed form of prayer, and presented it to the crew of the Dahabieh. All our boatmen put on

their best turbans and shirts, and went to prayers in the little mosque here, after which, on their return to the boat, they saluted each other with all the Arab ceremonies of touching hands several times, and inquiring after one another's health with as much earnestness and apparent interest as if they had not met for six months! In short, it is a general holiday, and our boatmen, who are light-hearted and joyous, even under severe labour and privation, showed themselves nearly out of their wits with spirits in the anticipation of Mohammed's mutton, and the sherbet we had promised them in the evening.

After breakfast we crossed the river to the western bank to proceed to the Rock of Abousir, whither all pilgrims like ourselves repair to obtain a complete view of the Second Cataract. Our donkeys were transported across in a ferry-boat, into which each was carried like a child in the arms of two men, as they were neither to be coaxed nor driven into stepping across the plank that formed a communication from the bank to the boat's edge. They were disembarked in the same manner, and although one of them tumbled into the hold of the ferry-boat, and another into the water, they all bore the operation with asi-nine philosophy, and resumed all their natural

alacrity when we mounted them. Our way lay for two hours and a half across the desert, the sands of which are so loose and shifting as to render them intolerably fatiguing to walk over, and the only signs of life we met with were a covey of partridges, much resembling our English species, but with a brighter plumage. Signs of death were more plentiful, for no less than three skeletons of dromedaries did we find on our road, bleached and dried by the sun and winds into such lightness that I think I could have lifted them without an effort. We reached the rock at one o'clock, under such a sun as it would be vain to talk of to you dwellers in the North—for one must have entered the Torrid Zone in order to understand its force—and as I gaspingly ascended to the utmost summit of the rock, I endeavoured to cool my imagination by thinking of the sort of weather to which you and our other dear friends are now exposed in London and Paris, where December always shows itself in its dreariest colours and bitterest temper. The force of imagination, however, did not in this instance overcome the reality that was overpowering me, and although my thoughts and aspirations were at that moment careering three thousand miles away from Abousir, *I felt* that the material portion of me was there, chained to that burning rock.

What a splendid view it commands! The Second Cataract covers a space of six or seven miles in length, infinitely more intricate than the first one, from the innumerable rocky islets that are thickly sprinkled throughout its whole extent; indeed I cannot imagine how any boat can darn its way among them, or live through the narrow rapids that rush and tumble in all directions. Far, far off to the south we could just discern the mountains of Dongola, like a purple cloud on the transparent horizon, but I felt not a wish to approach nearer to them; for here, arrived at the furthest limit to which I had bounded my wanderings before I left home, and while measuring the great distance that separates me from many so dear to me, my heart yearns only for a return to them, and a sort of sick impatience has come over me to commence retrograding, which I never experienced while progressing forwards,—and yet all of interest that the voyage possesses is still before me!

The rock of Abousir presents towards the Cataracts an almost perpendicular wall, pierced here and there with holes, which the wild doves and pigeons have converted into a magnificent natural dovecote. Towards the desert it is accessible by a succession of lower crags, which

facilitate the ascent, and on that side every portion of flat surface it possesses is literally covered with the names of travellers who have penetrated thus far into Nubia—some of them celebrated ones in the annals of Egyptian travel and research, such as Belzoni and Wilkinson — the greater part English; but among them I found only two females who had preceded me there, both of them my countrywomen. My own name was of course added to this primitive *Livre des Voyageurs*, and, that duty performed, we took our last look of the wild cataract, and descended to the spot where we had left our donkeys.

On returning to Wadi Halfa, we found that during our absence the Dahabieh had undergone a complete metamorphosis, the main-mast having been struck and laid on the roof of the cabins, the deck planks taken up to make room for the rowers (for we are to be rowed down the stream), the kitchen removed, &c. &c. All this is preparatory to our descending the river, where sails would be worse than useless to us, and where we must depend upon the current and the oars of our men to make head against the northerly winds. To-morrow we commence our return to the Land of Egypt, but as we have all the temples of Lower Nubia to visit in our progress

downwards, we shall be quite as long in descending as we have been in ascending the Nile between the two cataracts.

As this is a day of general feasting among the followers of the Prophet, Hadgee Mustapha thought it necessary that even we infidels should comply with the universal custom, so he gave us, in addition to our usual bill of fare, the famous Turkish dish of a lamb stuffed with rice, raisins, almonds, pistachio-nuts, and various spices, and roasted whole; this is the favourite *roti* of the Turks, and we found it excellent. In the evening I had a quantity of orange sherbet made for the men, and distributed it among them myself, which flattered them so much that their joy could only find vent in an extempore chorus of gratitude; after which they commenced dancing, and worked themselves up into such a state of wild but innocent hilarity with their songs and antics, that by way of finale to the entertainment they threw themselves headforemost into the river, turbans and all!

The cold bath acted as a sedative, and now all is once more quiet, and our Arabs, like tired children, are sleeping round a fire which they lighted for themselves on shore. Through the open door of my cabin I can see Mohammed on the fore

part of the deck reading the Arabian Nights Entertainments in Arabic to the cook, the Reis, and his son Salem; and their attitudes of attention, their dark eager faces grouped together, and partially lighted by a lantern suspended from above, would form an admirable subject for an Eastern sketch. Our French servants are slumbering away on the cushions of the tent the *ennuis* of a *jour de fête* which has offered them neither *cafés*, nor *restaurants*, nor *billets de spectacle*, nor the opportunity of making an extra toilette. They cannot comprehend the gratification of visiting a country where none of those Parisian adjuncts to pleasure (as understood by *them*) exist; and like all of their country people of that class, they have an unaccommodating and turbulent spirit which manifests itself under trifling contrarieties, in noisy outbreaks of temper, which render them intolerable nuisances when they are brought into such close collision with one, as must inevitably be the case in a Nile boat. I do not pretend to say that English servants are less difficult to be pleased; but they have a sentiment of respect for their superiors, and a propriety of feeling which leads them to be silent at least, even where they cannot be satisfied.

The moon just risen in her full splendour from

behind the Arabian hills, is shedding a flood of brilliance over stream and desert, crag and sand, imparting softness and refinement to that which in the light of day was wild, and savage, and barren even to desolation. From afar comes the faint baying of the chacal, and nought else but that mournful sound is to be heard! I sometimes wonder, when I look around me, at my feelings of security in these far solitudes, surrounded by a crew of wild Arabs, and far beyond the reach of Christian communication or protection, save that which is comprised in the few individuals of our own party. Yet I have never known a moment's apprehension since I left Cairo; and such is my reliance on the good faith of every person serving us, that I would trust myself to the end of the world with them; and I lie down to rest every night, secure that not one of these poor Fellahs would suffer harm to approach us. They are so unused to kindness, that a very little of it exhibited towards them wins their enthusiastic gratitude; and although it is the fashion to say that Arabs are only to be led by blows, I have had opportunities of testing that they are far more amenable to gentleness and good feeling. Would that their rulers thought so too!

CHAPTER X.

GHEBEL ADDEH.—TEMPLES OF IBSAMBOUL.—DERR.—A NUBIAN PALACE.—A NUBIAN PRINCE.—A NUBIAN HAREEM.—HIGH LIFE IN NUBIA.

Ibsamboul, Dec. 2, 1845.

We left Wadi Halfa at day-break yesterday, in the hope of being able to reach Ibsamboul early enough to see the temples before dark; but the wind was so strong against us that we were obliged to go down the stream sideways, and progressed so slowly as to find it impossible to effect our wishes. We stopped at a place called Ghebel Addeh on the eastern bank, where there is a small temple, or rather Speos, excavated in the rock, and attributed by Champollion to the best period of Egyptian architecture (the eighteenth dynasty), but we found little either to admire or to wonder at there. It is extremely small, and in a rude unfinished style, and its original embellishments have been overlaid by some hideous paintings

of saints executed in a most barbarous manner. These are evidences of the temple having been occupied and used as a place of worship by the early Christians—perhaps by some of the Fathers of the Church, who, after the schisms of which Alexandria was the theatre, took refuge in the desert, where they gathered round them converts to the pure Gospel truths then dawning upon mankind, whose sublime simplicity even in the midst of the perversions with which fanatics and schismatics sought to cloud them, must have put to shame the complicated mysteries of Egyptian idolatry. The bats have now almost effaced the traces of Christian consecration that lend a sacred interest to the walls of this rude Speos; and the stench created by the myriads of those filthy creatures congregated there, soon drove us back to our boat; and again we went forward until nightfall.

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I have just returned from exploring the two Temples of Ibsamboul, those wonderful rock-cut sanctuaries which for centuries remained a dead letter to mankind, having been so completely buried in the drifting sands of the desert that nothing save the head of one colossal statue was left uncovered to excite the surmise

and curiosity of Nile voyagers. None among them, however, had the spirit to undertake a clearance of the accumulated sand, and ascertain whether it buried merely a solitary statue, or whether a temple or a tomb were hidden beneath that avalanche, until in the year 1817, Belzoni, accompanied by Captains Irby and Mangles, volunteered to effect an excavation. To their enterprise, then, is the scientific world indebted for the discovery of one of the most magnificent specimens of Egyptian art existing in the valley of the Nile—a monument which Champollion attributes to the best epoch of Pharaonic civilization, and classes with the glorious ruins of Thebes, as greatest and best of all that remains of a wonderful age, and a no less wonderful people. Honoured be the names of those enterprising individuals whose labours have enabled all succeeding pilgrims of the Nile to visit these mighty shrines! They ought to be classed with the names of the discoverers of new countries; for old as are the temples they have restored to the light of the sun, the entrance to them had been for so many centuries closed to mankind, that they were new as unknown lands to the actual generation.

You can conceive nothing more singular and impressive than the *façade* of the great temple of Ibsamboul. Cut into the solid rock, this temple is not a *structure*, but an *excavation*, and it is the opinion of many scientific men that this description of rock-architecture was the first attempt of the ancient Egyptians to produce religious sanctuaries; consequently that the rock-temples of Nubia and Upper Egypt preceded all their edificial monuments, and are of a far earlier date than even that which is considered the patriarch of ruins, antique Thebes. This façade is composed of a large doorway guarded on either side by two colossal statues seated, the dimensions of which I shall leave you to judge of by telling you that when I had scrambled up the precipitous sand bank to the entrance of the temple, (which on the north side is still half-buried in bright yellow sand,) I sat down to take breath under the vast shadow of the last of these colossi, whose head is all that now remains above ground; and where, think you, did I shelter myself? *in its ear*, which afforded me a cool and commodious niche. These statues must not be tried by the test that is applied to the efforts of Grecian art; overwhelming vastness appears to

be what was aimed at and attained by those who executed this monstrous conception, and no attempt either at expression or finish was made. The proportions of the human body are well preserved, but there is no grace of limb, no dignity of attitude, no approach even to the semblance of a muscle in the uncovered parts of the limbs. There they sit, with their hands placed upon their knees, and their immoveable faces expressive only of a stony calm; but the effect produced by them when all the four were uncovered to the pedestals, must have been stupendous indeed, for they measure, as they sit, from their feet to the summit of their mitres sixty-five feet; and you may imagine what their bulk is, as it is proportioned to what their height would be *standing*. Between their legs are placed smaller statues, pigmy-looking productions, which at first we believed to be about the average height of a man; but upon the tallest person with us measuring himself with one of these figures, we found that it overtopped him by the head and shoulders; other statues of the same dimensions are placed between the colossi, and, compared with them, have the appearance of puppets, for which we had mistaken them until

we had tested their height as I have already stated. On the top of the door there is a figure of Osiris twenty feet high, with some hieroglyphical bas-reliefs of the same dimensions; and the façade of the temple is surmounted by a cornice and frieze covered with hieroglyphics, over which is a row of sculptured monkeys sitting down, which, compared with the colossi beneath them, appear little larger than frogs—they however measure eight feet in height and six feet across the shoulders.

As the numerous chambers of the temple are excavated in the rock, into which they penetrate one after the other, the first one alone receives light from without, and is the only part that can be examined by daylight. This first chamber is the pronaos, and is supported by eight square columns, four on either side, against each of which is placed a colossal standing statue, twenty-two feet high, every one of them bearing, according to Champollion, the precise lineaments of Rhamses the Great (Sesostris), in honour of whose warlike achievements the whole interior decorations of the temple appear to have been executed. Belzoni is in error when he says that the turbans of these eight colossi reach the ceiling. In the

first place they do not wear turbans, but the mitre-shaped head-dress of the Egyptian Kings bearing in front the serpent, the badge of royalty; and there is such an interval between their mitres and the ceiling that two of our Arabs climbed up to the top of them, and squatting on the extreme summit of the head-dress in their usual sitting posture, not only found ample space for themselves there, but looked like some well-proportioned ornament appertaining to them.

The temple is dedicated to Osiris, or Ammon Re, the Jupiter of the ancient Egyptians, but the embellishments are all in honour of Rhamses the Great, during whose reign the fane of Ibsamboul was probably excavated and adorned. The walls of the pronaos are covered with the most spirited sculptured representations of that great monarch's war against, and conquest of, some Asiatic nation; the figures are as large as life, and although characterized by the stiffness and ignorance of drawing exhibited in the ancient Egyptian delineations of the human body, they are remarkable in point of expression, especially those that represent the sacrifice by Rhamses' own hand of his captives. These battle scenes are interspersed with the royal cartouches, or ovals,



Schrantz del   Hullmandel & Walton Lithographers

INTERIOR OF THE GREAT ROCK TEMPLE OF IBSAMBOUL, NUBIA

Richard Bentley New Burlington Street

and hieroglyphical legends innumerable; and the figures of Osiris and of Isis, with their usual attributes, are introduced into the various chronicles of Rhamses' exploits. The ceiling of the pronaos is painted with repetitions of the winged globe, the symbol of the immortal soul, and the colours, among which blue predominates, are still distinguishable, as are some of the tintings with which the sculptures of the walls were originally beautified.

Mohammed had contrived some capital torches for the interior chambers; and Reis Ali, his son Salem, and six of our sailors accompanied us as torch-bearers. The pronaos opens into a square chamber, the walls of which are decorated with sculptured bas-reliefs, the subjects of them religious, and far too mystical to be understood by the uninitiated. Beyond this is the sekos, or sanctuary, a small chamber having in the middle a large square stone,—perhaps intended for an altar,—and at the end facing the entrance are four colossal statues representing Ammon Re, Phre, Phtah, and the hero of the temple, Rhamses. There are lateral chambers, some of them long narrow slips, others small square rooms, in all fourteen; each of them profusely embellished on the walls and ceilings with hieroglyphic

figures and legends, in the most beautiful preservation. The entrance of our torch-bearers disturbed a colony of bats settled in those deserted chambers, whose evolutions, as they whirled around us in circles, formed by no means an agreeable welcome. We had reason to know that the temple of Ibsamboul is the abode of serpents also, for in the corner of one of the dark lateral chambers, we found the skin cast by one of those reptiles there, unbroken, and looking like a silver network upon the finest white gauze—a tissue wherewith to make a fairy's garment — and altogether so curious and beautiful a thing, that I have brought it away with me.

After more than an hour passed in the great temple, we repaired to the lesser one; like its stupendous consort excavated in the rock and facing the river. It is of the same epoch, and was dedicated by Nofré-Ari, the queen of Rhamses the Great, to Isis, the great Egyptian goddess. The façade is ornamented with six colossal statues, thirty-five feet in height, hewn out of the rock, three at each side of the door, representing duplicates of Rhamses, his queen, and their eldest son; the queen having her daughters at her feet, the Pharaoh the remainder of his sons at his. The pronaos is supported by six square

pillars, three and three, to which are affixed Isis-headed Caryatides, the face broad and unmeaning and destitute of all beauty. A vestibule succeeds the pronaos, and then comes the sanctuary, at the furthermost end of which, in a niche, is a mutilated and almost effaced statue with a cow's head, no doubt representing the goddess Isis under her cow-like attributes. A broad band of hieroglyphics runs round all the doors, and the mystical bas-reliefs which ornament this temple are coloured, and in high preservation. Its façade is quite disengaged from any of those sand drifts that still obstruct and deface so much of the exterior of the great temple, and were it not for the vicinity of its stupendous neighbour, the lesser temple of Ibsamboul would pass for a colossal creation.

Now, then, I have for the first time, been enabled to form a distinct idea of the interior disposition of an Egyptian temple in all its parts; and if what I have just beheld has appeared to me imposing, almost overpoweringly grand, in its actual state of ruin and desolation, how must it have shown when the shrine still contained its idols—when those vast portals, thrown open, revealed to the wondering eyes of the multitude the interior of the rude rock, cut into chambers of beauty succeeding each other into dim per-

spective—and glimpses of pictured walls, where the attributes and feats of gods and heroes were mingled together in glowing hues—and processions of priests and princes in their gorgeous robes passing along them—and gigantic forms looking down from their stony pedestals in awful calm—and the Holy of Holies, the dark sanctuary, with its sculptured gods, wrapped in solemn gloom beyond, indistinct and fearful as the mysterious rites enacted there, which filled their votaries' breasts with trembling awe! And now what has succeeded to all that pomp? Where the deities were enshrined, the bat has made its foul nest—and where the priests of Ammon unrobed themselves, there the serpent casts its skin! Oh vanity of vanities! Could the seer's prophetic eye have penetrated so far into futurity as to behold the actual desolation of Egypt's proud fanes, what a subject would they have furnished for that saddening text of "the preacher"——ALL IS VANITY!

Derr, 13th Dec.

We found ourselves, on waking this morning, at Derr the capital of Nubia—and such a capital! I should rather say such a capital joke to apply the term to a collection of mud hovels! It, however, contains an excavated temple of sand-

stone of the same date as those of Ibsamboul, and representing in its bas-reliefs the warlike exploits of Rhamses Sesostris. Of the four colossal statues that originally decorated the façade, nothing but the lower extremities remain; indeed, such is the dilapidation of this temple, or, more correctly speaking, *speos* (it being purely a rock excavation), that I should say violence as well as time has laid its ruthless hand there; as large fragments of the roof, evidently detached by force, choke up the principal entrance. After Ibsamboul, we had no eyes for the temple of Derr, so we rode into the town, which stands in a beautiful grove of stately palm-trees, the finest I have yet seen; but this is the country of *dates*, both as regards temples and trees—in their latter capacity they form not only the principal sustenance of the people here (to whom bread is unknown), but their sole object of commerce; in their former capacity, I need not tell you that they form at once the delight and despair of antiquaries, and have nearly distracted me since I have been here. Pray heaven that I may not distract you too with the fruits of my observations!

As we rode through the cemetery we observed, amidst this poor and uncivilized people, an affect-

ing custom which might well serve as an example to wealthier and more polished nations. The poverty of the Nubians does not admit of tombstones, and their graves are marked out either by an outline of pebbles, or by a rude fragment of stone placed at the head and the foot; yet at every grave I noticed a bowl of water and an earthen pipkin filled with roasted *dhourra* (Indian corn), and on asking Mohammed the meaning of such accessories to such a spot, he told me that it was the custom of the people here to place food for the poor every Friday on the graves of their friends and relations; thus conferring upon them, as it were, the prerogative of posthumous charity, and enabling the starving poor to go and obtain a meal from the hands of the dead.

Nubia, before it became tributary to Egypt, was governed by its native princes; but Mohammed Ali, after his conquest of the country, deemed it good policy to leave the shadow of power to its Sovereigns. He therefore invested them with a certain local authority as his Lieutenants, and thus propitiated their good services, which were valuable to him in the way of obtaining taxes from the conquered people, with whom their influence was of course paramount to his own. The native Sovereign actually holding

his Court at Derr, is Hussein Kiashef, and as I was anxious to see a Nubian Prince in all his glory, I sent my dragoman to solicit an audience. Now do not be winding up your imagination to expect a detail of an Arabian Night's Entertainment, or fancy that I was about to enter a palace of marble hung with gold and silver stuffs, and to find a body-guard of Ethiops with jewels in their ears in attendance upon his Highness. Quite the reverse; — the Kiashef's palace is a mud-edifice, rather of a better and more spacious description than those of his subjects, and is preceded by sundry court-yards and flights of broken steps, in which we found no guard of honour, or any living thing in waiting but some meagre-looking goats and a multitude of pigeons. However, at the entrance of his audience chamber we were received by a dozen attendants dressed in white shirts and turbans, and found the Kiashef himself, a fine looking old man, standing in the middle of the room to receive us. This room, an exceedingly large one, is covered in with beams of palm-trees thatched over with the dried leaves of that (in this country) tree of all work. The mud walls, guiltless of either paper or paint, and in all the beautiful simplicity of Nile slime hardened in the sun, looked perfectly

clean, as did the clay floor, in the middle of which was a circular heap of ashes hollowed out in the centre and filled with live embers—a strange adjunct in such a climate, when I tell you that the temperature at this moment is that of June in Italy. At the upper end of the room was spread a large Persian carpet, upon which were placed the Prince's cushions, and to the left of him was a smaller Persian carpet furnished in the same manner with cushions. Upon these we were directed to take our seats, while our host with great dignity assumed his at the head of the room, and desired Mohammed to sit upon the edge of his carpet to interpret for us. Opposite to us on a mat were squatted five Nubians in very fierce-looking turbans, with their slippers placed before them — the notabilities of the place; for on my asking who they were, Mohammed very naïvely replied that they were "the Mollah and the great lawyers of Derr — what you call in England the Attorney-General and Lord Brougham." (And here, *par paranthése*, I must tell you that whenever Mohammed is alluding to the Scheikh-ul-Islam, or head of the Mahometan religion at Cairo, he invariably calls him the Archbishop of Canterbury, by which parallel he fancies he renders the functions of that

personage more intelligible to us.) On the wall behind the Prince were suspended his Nubian arms, consisting of the broad-bladed sword peculiar to this country, a dagger, shield, and gun. The lower end of the room was occupied by the household servants standing, and I should imagine from the rolls of mats and cushions that were piled up there, it must be converted into a dormitory at night.

Of course I directed Mohammed to make the Prince a very fine speech in my name, and to tell him that I had stopped at Derr only for the honour of seeing him; and that his name was well known in England (!!!) where the accounts brought by travellers of his kind reception of them had obtained much respect for him, &c. &c. All this appeared to please Hussein Kiashef very much, and after returning the compliment, he asked *how old I was?* A pretty proof of good breeding, you will say; but in Nubia it is not considered an insult, or even a hazardous inquiry, to ask a lady her age; on the contrary, I found that such questions make up the sum of what is considered polite small talk; so after glancing round to ascertain that no European was within hearing, I actually answered by telling the *truth*, and immediately asked how old

all the members of the Royal Family are, and looked exceedingly edified at hearing their several ages declined to me. Pipes were now brought, and coffee; and after duly discussing them, we were preparing to depart when Hussein Kiashef requested us to prolong our visit for another quarter of an hour, that we might receive the present he destined for us, and that I might be introduced to his hareem. In a few minutes afterwards, a large live black sheep was carried by two slaves into the audience-chamber, and set down in the middle of the floor, where he showed his ignorance of courtly etiquette by behaving as sheep are wont to do in meadows. Two other slaves followed, each bearing a large bag of dates; and the Prince begged us to accept those patriarchal offerings with so good a grace, that to have declined them would have been to offend.

I was then conducted to the hareem; the old gentleman's connubial establishment consisting of three Nubian wives and three Abyssinian slaves, with a number of attendants, and children in plenty. My reception took place in a sort of *al fresco* chamber, half of which only is covered in from the rays of the sun by woven palm-leaves; a large mat of the same materials very prettily

woven in different colours was spread under this awning, and there my conductors (half a dozen of Hussein Kiashef's male household) directed me to seat myself. But I remained standing until the ladies entered, which they presently did in a crowd, smelling so abominably of castor-oil, that I almost sickened at their approach. They all touched my hands several times, the mode of salutation in this part of the world, and said something which of course I did not understand, to which I replied by saying something equally unintelligible to them; and we then seated ourselves upon the mat and looked at each other, no doubt with similar sentiments of curiosity and—the reverse of admiration. These ladies wore their hair, which in hue and quality is exactly like the fleece of a black sheep (of a sooty, rusty colour,) in the Nubian fashion, and so abundantly anointed with castor-oil, that it distilled all down their cheeks and saturated their garments. Their faces are tattooed on the chin and cheeks with blue stars, the under lip is dyed blue, and the eyelids stained with *kohl*, which enlarges and lengthens the appearance of the eyes, and is thought to add to their brilliancy. You must not, however, imagine that my Princesses are negresses; they are of the

Berber race, which, although nearly black, is very comely, and possesses none of the negro characteristics of face or form. They wore a number of bracelets of bone or ivory, silver rings, and five or six necklaces each, of various sorts of coloured beads; their outward garment of blue cotton so completely enveloped their persons that I could not ascertain the fashion or quality of the dress worn underneath, but their arms and feet were bare, and tattooed with designs in blue like their faces.

A large flat basket made of palm-leaves, and filled with dates and a sort of white sweetmeat, was brought in and placed before me, and I was invited to eat; but preparatory to doing so, I drew off my gloves, a pair of tanned kid, well fitting French gloves, which, being a few shades lighter than their *own skins*, they had, as it would appear, mistaken for *mine*—for from the shout they set up when they beheld the operation, and the eager manner in which they all leaned forward to examine first my hands and then the gloves, it is evident they imagined I had been St. Bartholomewising myself in their honour. I put the gloves on and off several times to please my entertainers, at which they laughed with all the glee of children; and had I had an interpre-

ter at hand I should certainly have told them that having been afflicted by nature with a white skin, I had adopted that darker covering for my hands to assimilate them to their own more beautiful complexions. But I did better; I presented each of them with a pair of Mosaic gold ear-rings and bracelet-clasps, and left them immeasurably happy with these acquisitions to their finery. To the chief slave, who had accompanied me, I gave an English penknife; when the other five saw it, they began to clamour for the same, and upon finding that I did not acquiesce in their demand, they placed their backs against the door of the hareem and refused to let me pass out. I own to you that for a moment I felt extremely terrified; they were all very fierce, lawless-looking men, and I was quite alone, and beyond the reach of making myself heard by any one belonging to my party. I did not, however, lose my self-possession, but turning back to the ladies' apartment, I called upon the elder one by signs to order the door to be opened. One word from her effected my egress, and I returned to the Prince's Divan to take my leave of him, and to express my thanks for having been introduced to his hareem. Then mounting my donkey, I returned to the boat accompanied by a whole escort

of his people, (including the Attorney-General to whom I had promised—not a brief, but a penknife,) and we sent back to his Highness, Hussein Kiashef, a present of English gunpowder, (which is prized here above all things,) oranges, brandy, and dried raisins. Thus ended my first introduction to high life in Nubia, and I hope you will admit that I played the courtier tolerably well!

CHAPTER XI.

NUBIAN BALLET.—OSTRICH EGGS.—DESERT DROMEDARIES.—ABABDE ARABS.—WADY SEBOOA.—DAKKEH.—SECOND EDITIONS OF TEMPLES.—GHIRSCHÉ HOUSSEYN.—DANDOUR.—EGYPTIAN MERCURY.—THE VENDETTA.—RAHABA.—KALABSCHI.—THE GOD MALOULI.—BET-OUALLY.—DEBOD.

Korosko, Dec. 14, 1845.

Last evening we reached this place, and were again visited by Monsieur d'Arnault, who took tea with us. At a later hour we landed, and witnessed a national ballet which Mohammed had organized for our entertainment on the summit of a high bank overlooking the river. The decorations were worthy of the performance; on one side a group of stately palm-trees, on the other an immense herd of dromedaries tethered and tied to pickets; in the back-ground the Desert with a Bedouin encampment on its skirt; fantastically-shaped mountains bounding the scene, and the whole lighted up by the glorious moon and myriads of resplendent stars. What *mise en scène*, either at our Opera House,

or at the Académie Royale de Musique in Paris, could be compared to such natural decorations! And now for the performers—the Elslers and Ceritos of Korosko. They were Nubian and Abyssinian dancing-women, six in number, some of them finely formed, and with pleasing countenances, all of them dressed in the fashion I have told you is peculiar to the females of this country, and as fine and *fragrant* as nose-rings, ear-rings, bracelets, and castor-oil could render them. Their dances are quite dissimilar to those of the Turkish and Egyptian Bayadères, and far less objectionable, for they do not offend delicacy, although they certainly are in direct opposition to all our European pre-conceived ideas of grace. If I had not previously been aware that what I was about to witness was *dancing*, I should have supposed that our *corps de ballet* had been simultaneously seized with epileptic convulsions; so extraordinary was the series of contortions executed by them in cadence to the clapping of hands and stamping of feet. The most admired of these performances consists in throwing back the head, gradually protruding the chest and stomach with measured jerks, and bending backwards until the body is perfectly arched, and the head nearly touches the heels. Then at the very

moment when you suppose that the dancer's backbone must be broken, or her neck dislocated, by so extraordinary an effort, she recovers her equilibrium with surprising dexterity; always contriving as she regains a perpendicular position to salute the spectator nearest to her by sweeping her oily tresses before his face, when it is the custom to reward her feat by moistening a small gold coin and applying it to her forehead. Another then takes her place, while the last performer falls back and joins the chorus to whose voices these dances are executed. On this occasion the orchestra was *par extraordinaire*, one of Monsieur d'Arnault's servants playing upon a sort of Egyptian guitar, which produced sounds very much resembling the buzzing of a bee in a bottle; and our boatmen, who had brought their darabookahs and tambourine, joining heartily with voice and hand in the chorus.

This morning Monsieur d'Arnault sent me a present of some beautiful ostrich eggs. They are found in the adjacent Desert; and in a country where every article of food is both scarce and bad they are esteemed a luxury for the table—but I had not the courage to make a trial of them. Monsieur d'Arnault tells me that the hen ostrich will lay upwards of thirty eggs at a time, which

she deposits in the sand and slightly covers up, but that it is an error to suppose that she takes no further heed of them: she returns at night to sit upon them, and it is only during the day-time that she abandons them to the fostering care of the sun.

There happens to be at this time a tribe of Ababde Arabs of the Desert encamped in the neighbourhood; they having come to Korosko to consign to the persons who are to forward them to Cairo an immense troop of dromedaries, purchased from them for Ibrahim Pasha. The dromedaries of the Desert are as superior to the other race as are blood-horses to common hacks; but they do not thrive at Cairo: like their Arab breeders, the air of a city, and food more generous than the meagre diet of the Desert, destroy them, and they die away in a surprisingly short time after they have been brought down to Lower Egypt. Ibrahim Pasha, however, who is a great agriculturist, perseveres in his endeavours to render the Lower Country propitious to the Desert dromedaries, in order that they may supersede the use of cattle for agricultural purposes on his extensive estates; and the fine troop of them now here, are going to replace his Highness's oxen and buffaloes which have this

year perished in the murrain that has committed such ravages among the horned cattle of Egypt. These Ababde Arabs possess the district of the Eastern Desert, stretching from the Second Cataract to Esneh, where the dominion of the other great tribe of Bedouins, the Beni Ouasel Arabs, commences, and reaches to Suez. The Ababde chief, a splendid-looking man, who boasts of being of a royal race, and whose sovereignty over his tribe is absolute, came to see us this morning, and with true Arab hospitality invited us to visit him in the Desert, promising us dromedaries for the journey, and an escort to protect us. This we could not accept, but we rode out, accompanied by Monsieur d'Arnault, to see his encampment at the entrance of the Desert, and there we found such a little wandering colony as one may imagine formed the suite of Abraham when he came down into Egypt. These Ababdes, when they come into the vicinity of a village or town like Korosko, comply so far with civilized customs as to put on an Arab shirt, but in the Desert they wear nothing but a long strip of cotton cloth wound round their loins. They never cover their heads, and the manner of dressing their hair is most extraordinary and absurd. They frizzle it out to an enormous size, exactly

like the *perruques de Marquis* of the French *Opéra Comique*, then powder it with shred butter, and stick a wooden skewer through it, which they use either as a comb, or to scratch their heads without deranging their *coiffures*. Some of these Ababdes are very handsome, notwithstanding their ridiculous-looking heads, with a very peculiar character of countenance, great freedom and nobleness of carriage, and lithe sinewy limbs, betokening at once strength and activity. Yet they live entirely upon camel's milk and cheese, and scarcely ever taste any bread but the thin cakes they occasionally make of the *dhourra* meal, obtained by them in exchange for their kids and dromedaries, when they come into the neighbourhood of a town or village. The chief returned with us to our boat, accompanied by the *Scheikh-el-belled* of Korosko; and we regaled them with coffee and sherbet, and sent them back, each with a present of English gun-powder and pen-knives, very much to their delight.

Debod, Dec. 18th.

On the afternoon of the 14th we reached Wady Sebooa (or the Valley of Lions), just in time to visit before dark the remains of a temple, or hemi-speos, being half excavated in the rock, half-built, and altogether a very rude construc-

tion, although of the time of Rhamses Sesostris. It is in a dreadfully dilapidated condition, and, the materials of which it is formed being of very soft sandstone, its sculptures are nearly effaced. The most remarkable feature about it is a dromos, or avenue of andro-sphinxes, leading from the entrance of the temple to the river's side, but now in as degraded a state as the sanctuary itself. This and the next temple in succession, at Maharraka, where we arrived early on the following morning, possess little to admire, or to excite interest; nevertheless, they must be seen, otherwise the chain of Nubian constructions (a connoisseur would say, the string of pearls,)—would be broken. But I will not inflict Maharraka upon you, for, although it looks well from the river, its walls contain neither hieroglyphic nor embellishment, and it appears to be altogether of a very inferior order.

But on the same day we came to Dakkeh, which is indeed a gem; for, with the exception of the granite obelisk of Luxor, I have not as yet met anywhere with the same sharpness of execution, and state of preservation, both in the bas-relief and the intaglio style of ornament, as in this temple. It also possesses the advantage of standing quite isolated in the midst of the

wild Desert, without being encumbered with any of those filthy Arab accessories that generally degrade the ruins of Egypt. In the pronaos are traces of the early Christians having established themselves there, for upon the cornice are ill-executed paintings, now half obliterated, of some of the saints of the Greek Church. According to Champollion's reading of the hieroglyphic legends at Dakkeh, the oldest part of the temple was constructed and sculptured under Eugamenes, the most celebrated of the Ethiopian kings of Egypt; it was continued by the Greek Evergetes and the two succeeding Ptolemies; and the Roman Emperor Augustus was the last sovereign who added to the embellishments of the interior, which he, however, never terminated. Two historical facts were also obtained by the same learned hieroglyphist at Dakkeh. The first is, that Nubia ceased to belong to Egypt from the epoch of the fall of the 26th Dynasty dethroned by Cambyses, at which period it passed under the yoke of the Ethiopians, and remained subject to them, until the conquest of Ptolemy Evergetes reunited it once more to Egypt. The other is, that the Cæsars, the Ptolemies, and even the Egyptian kings of the Ethiopian dynasty, were not the creators of temples, but only reconstructed

those which had previously existed in Nubia, as well as Egypt, in the time of the Pharaohs, and which had been destroyed by the Persians, *dedicating them to the same divinities;* a convincing proof that the domination of the Greeks and the Romans had produced no innovation in the religion of the Egyptians. Dakkeh is the most southern point where he found monuments executed under the Ptolemies and the Cæsars, which convinces him that the Greek and Roman domination did not extend beyond Ibrim. From Dakkeh to Thebes he found an almost continuous series of edifices constructed at those two epochs. The Pharaonic monuments are there rare, whilst those of the Ptolemies and the Cæsars abound, and are almost all unfinished. From all this he deduced that the temples of the Pharaohs were defaced by the Persian conquerors of Egypt, and that they were reconstructed by the Ptolemies and the Cæsars—and he very expressively terms the old monuments thus restored, "des secondes éditions des temples."

Temple upon temple! they followed each other in such rapid succession that I feared I should have a surfeit of them, and already felt the difficulty of digesting so many propyla as daily fell to my lot during the first days of our descent of

the Nile. After seeing Maharraka and Dakkeh on the same day, we stopped in the evening to visit the Temple of Ghirsché Housseyn, a grand hemi-speos much in the style of Ibsamboul, dedicated by Rhamses Sesostris to the god Phtha, the Egyptian Vulcan. The architecture of the interior chambers, like all rock-cut temples, has suffered little injury either from time or the ravages of a destroying enemy; but the constructed part of it, consisting of a pronaos of sandstone, supported by colossal Caryatides, is in the most lamentable state of dilapidation. The position of Ghirsché Housseyn is magnificent, standing on an eminence on the western bank of the Nile, facing the river, and surrounded by the Desert. Its general appearance as one enters the excavated parts where the rays of the sun have never penetrated, is imposing and solemn to a degree. The fitful light thrown over lines of stupendous pillars supporting colossal statues, by torches formed out of ropes' ends, which, tossed aloft by half-naked Nubians, assumed the appearance of fiery serpents in the hands of demons, gave a fantastic and supernatural colouring to the whole scene; and a multitude of bats, scared by the unwelcome glare out of their dark retreats, and flitting madly about, like the spirits

in Freyschutz, added in no small degree to the unearthly character of the place. The closeness of the atmosphere in chambers which no current of air has ever refreshed, the heat and smoke occasioned by the burning ropes, and above all the abominable effluvium of the bats, produced such a stifling sensation that I was glad to escape from them into the open air; but in taking a last look at the chambers, with their colossal accessories penetrating far into the bowels of the rock, and remembering at the same time, that, when this temple was erected, the use of iron was supposed to be unknown in Egypt, and gunpowder not even dreamed of, I was seized with a wondering awe of the people who could have achieved works of so stupendous a nature, as if by enchantment, without iron tools to hew, or gunpowder to blast the solid rock.

The character of the people of Girsché Housseyn is so notoriously bad, that we deemed it advisable to go on shore armed, which, at all events, gave us a feeling of security, although we found in this instance, as in many others, the applicability of the French proverb, "le diable n'est pas si noir qu'on le peint," for we were not called upon for any measures of self-defence;—even Hadgee Mustapha, who seldom leaves the

boat, thought it right to accompany us, armed with some sharp-bladed culinary implement; so that altogether we presented a very formidable appearance. The whole population of a village at the foot of the hill assembled round the entrance of the temple as soon as they became aware of our landing, and we were assailed with clamours for *bachshish,* which sounded more like threats than supplications. Demands for gunpowder were also made, and innumerable entreaties for medicines, and all sorts of plaisters and eye-water. The Arabs fancy that all English travellers understand medicine and surgery, and they have an absolute passion for being doctored and physicked by them. In the commencement of our voyage we soon found the necessity of withholding from our crew the knowledge that we had a tolerably well stocked English pharmacy on board, for they would always have been petitioning for a dose of medicine as a preventive to illness, and fortunately not one of them have required it. On the day after we left Cairo, one of the men tore his hand, which I set to rights for him with court-plaister. Their admiration of this remedy is not to be described; every succeeding day a new applicant came to me, holding out a foot or a hand to be doctored, and exhibit-

ing such neat, clean little cuts upon them, that at last I became convinced they were inflicted purposely, and merely for the pleasure of wearing a patch of sticking-plaister.

Amongst the beggars at Girsché Housseyn was an old woman a hundred years of age, and the first very old person I have seen in this country. She was perfectly hideous; black and dried as a mummy, and with a grey beard that would have enabled her admirably to personify one of Macbeth's witches. There is no possibility of judging of a Nubian woman's age from her appearance; the precocious developement of the human race is such in this country, that men are married at seventeen years of age, and women at thirteen or fourteen; at five and twenty they are past their prime, and I have frequently been startled, upon asking the age of some native, to hear that it was thirty, when I expected that it must be fifty at least.

The whole of the 16th and 17th we remained at anchor opposite to Dandour, where we had stopped to visit a small temple, very little worth the time it cost us to see it, for even to my unscientific eye it is quite a modern affair, and has, moreover, never been finished. But amongst the sculptures I discovered a figure

which, for the first time, we have met with in Egyptian embellishments, and doubtless intended to represent Mercury, as it holds the serpent-twisted Caduceus; the head-dress is very much like our lawyers' wigs, and the countenance so strongly resembles one of our great legal celebrities, that we were all struck by the likeness. As this is the only time we have perceived the introduction of Mercury into the Egyptian mythology, I am inclined to attribute this solitary instance to a Roman innovation.

From the most sultry heat, we fell into wintry weather at Dandour; a regular hurricane blew from the north, and effectually impeded our progress. Two days were we there, chained to the bank, and, after the first morning, unable even to go on shore in consequence of the clouds of sand that filled and obscured the atmosphere; we could almost have fancied ourselves in a London fog, and even those among our crew who were accustomed to such visitations, were half choked and blinded when they landed.

At that place we became aware that the Vendetta exists in full force, and is cherished amongst the Arabs of this country as it is by the Corsicans. From the moment we touched at Dandour, we noticed that two of our sailors,

Sulieman and Ali Pasha, (we have so many Alis on board, that to distinguish one from the other, each has received a *sobriquet,* and that of Pasha has been given to the young man in question; in like manner we have Long Hassan, Short Hassan, and Hassan the Singer, and Mohammeds, with all sorts of *aliases* tacked to them);—but to return to Sulieman and Ali Pasha, who are cousins and Berbers. We perceived that they had crept into the bottom of the hold, and covering themselves up with their long Arab mantles, as well as with all the mats and empty hen-coops they could gather together, lay hidden there; only putting their noses out now and then, like crocodiles rising to the surface of the water to take breath, and not emerging even to eat their meals with the rest of the crew. Upon inquiring the reason of this concealment, we learned that many years ago the grandfather of Sulieman and of Ali Pasha had killed a man at Dandour. It immediately became the duty of every relation and descendant of the murdered person, from generation to generation, in accordance with the Vendetta system, to pursue and take away the life of every one related by ties of blood to the murderer, whenever they should fall in their way; and as, in the case in point,

more than one life has already been sacrificed to this barbarian principle of revenge, our two boatmen felt that their safety depended upon their presence at Dandour being unknown, and neither of them showed himself upon deck until we had left the place far behind us. They were right, for Mohammed told us that our boat had not been there half a day before several men, aware that the two Berbers in question exercise the profession of Nile boatmen, had been down to the beach to enquire whether they were on board our Dahabieh; had the question been answered in the affirmative, they would have watched the opportunity of their landing to have wreaked their vengeance upon those unoffending young men.

At Dandour Mohammed purchased from a slave-dealer a young negress for his sister, and we have permitted him to convey her to Cairo in our boat, where there is plenty of room for her. She is from Darfour, and is about thirteen years old, black as ebony, with a mild and patient expression of countenance. Poor thing! the tears rolled silently down her cheeks when she was taken away from the slave-merchant and brought among strangers. She neither knows to whom she belongs nor whither she is

going, and has never spoken a word since she came on board; but sits muffled up to the eyes in her blue cotton covering, the very picture of silent woe. And well may she look sad, poor child! for she has been sold from her mother's side. This is one of the most painful features of slavery in this part of the world, where, in a general point of view, and to speak candidly, slavery has nothing objectionable in it but its name; for, from the kind treatment which slaves receive from their owners, who look upon them as children, and provide for them as such, it becomes a desirable condition for the natives of barbarous Africa to become the property of Turkish or Egyptian masters. But there are distressing exceptions, and this child's case forms one of them. When a male and female slave belonging to the same owner marry together, all the children proceeding from that union become the property of their master; they are his slaves from the moment they are born; and, if such be his pleasure, they can be sold by him just like his sheep, or his dromedaries, or any other live stock in his possession. This is the case with Rahaba, the young negress in question: she is the child of two slaves thus married; her father is dead, and her master has only waited until

she attained the age when he was sure of obtaining a good price for her, to send her to the slave-market; and thus has she been separated from her mother, whom she can never hope to see again. But she has, I hope, fallen into good hands, and will be well taken care of by Mohammed's sister, who is a respectable married woman inhabiting Cairo. Mohammed paid seven hundred and fifty piastres for her to the slave-dealer, and he will have to pay an additional three hundred and fifty piastres (making her price altogether about eleven pounds) duty at Es-souan, where all slaves entering Egypt from Nubia are taxed; a source of great revenue to Mohammed Ali.

Yesterday we reached Kalabschi, where there is another temple. Notwithstanding the fiat of the Purists and *Pharaonists*, who class this edifice with the *modern inferiorities*, we think it very fine! According to the best authorities upon such subjects, there have existed upon the same spot three successive temples, all dedicated to the same god, Malouli. The first of these was constructed by one of the Pharaohs (Amenophis II.); the second in the time of the Ptolemies; and the third and actual one under the Roman Emperors Augustus, Caius Caligula, and Trajan, by whom it was never terminated. This would account for

the quantities of broken blocks of stone which fill not only the several divisions of the edifice, but encumber the ground all around it, and render its approach a series of break-neck feats and hair-breadth escapes. But Kalabschi, besides appearing to have been left off unfinished, bears the traces of having undergone extreme violence in an attempt to destroy as well as disfigure it. As its date as a Roman construction negatives the possibility of these injuries having been inflicted by the barbarian followers of Cambyses, to whom is attributed the primary destruction of all the Pharaonic fanes, it is admissible to suppose that Kalabschi may have been injured by the Saracen conquerors of Egypt. I should have said the early Christians, or Iconoclasts, had I perceived any traces of their religious paintings covering the sculptures of the various chambers. The architecture of Kalabschi is extremely striking, and even beautiful for an *Egyptian temple*, which, bear in mind, is a description of structure that I do not admire. It is perfect in all its parts, by which I mean that it possesses all the accessories requisite to complete a religious edifice of the first class; and besides these, there is a magnificent paved avenue leading from the river's side to the propylon. Over all

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the doorways is sculptured the winged globe; and the bas-reliefs on the walls still bear traces of the brilliant tints and even of the gilding with which they were originally beautified; but even *I* can detect that they are of a very inferior execution to those of Ibsamboul. To send you a detail of those bas-reliefs, would be to give you a summary of the ancient Egyptian Mythology, which, in all due humility, I profess not to understand. Shall I give you Monsieur Champollion's own words on the subject of the peculiar nature of the god Malouli, to whom Kalabschi was dedicated? *

"Ammon-Ra is the point from which not only all the divine essences of Egyptian Mythology emanate, but which unites them. Ammon-Ra, the supreme and first created, being father of himself, is qualified with the title of husband of

* Each city and town of Egypt and Nubia had its patron deity. Chnouphis and Saté reigned at Elephantina, Essouan, and Beghé; Phré at Ibsamboul, Derr, and Amada; Phtah at Ghirsché; Anouké at Maschaket; Thoth, the superintendant of Chnouphis over the whole of Nubia, had his principal fiefs at Ghebal-addeh and Dakkeh; Osiris was lord of Dandour; Isis, queen at Philæ; Athor at Ibsamboul; and, lastly, Malouli at Kalabsché. But Ammon-Ra reigned over all, and habitually occupied the right-hand place in every sanctuary.

his mother (the goddess Mouth), the feminine portion being amalgamated with his own essence, which is at once male and female; all the other Egyptian gods are only varied forms of these two constituent principles—they are merely pure abstractions of the Great Being. These second, third, &c., forms establish an uninterrupted chain, which descends from Heaven and materializes itself into earthly incarnations and human shapes. The last of these incarnations is that of Horus, and this last link of the divine chain forms, under the name of Horammon, the Ω of the gods, of which Ammon Horus (the great Ammon, the active and generating spirit) is the A. The starting-point of Egyptian Mythology is a *Triad*, composed of the three parts of Ammon-Ra, viz. Ammon (the male and the father), Mouth (the female and the mother), and Khons (the son). This Triad, having manifested itself upon earth, is resolved into Osiris, Isis, and Horus. But the parity was not complete, since Osiris and Isis were brother and sister; at Kalabschi, however, the final Triad, that of which the three members resolved themselves exactly into the initial Triad, is completed: Horus there bears the title of husband of his mother, and the son which his mother Isis has borne to him, and

who is called Malouli, is the tutelary deity of Kalabschi, and on the walls of the temple are fifty bas-reliefs representing his genealogy. Thus the final Triad was composed of Horus, of his mother Isis, and of their son Malouli; personages who correspond exactly with the initial Triad, Ammon, his mother Mouth, and their son Khons. And therefore Malouli was adored at Kalabschi under a form similar to that of Khons, except that the youthful deity is there qualified with the title of Lord of Kalabschi."

And now have you understood it? for my own part I protest that having read, translated, and pondered over this curious document, I am not one whit the more enlightened than I was before I arrived in this land of mysteries. And yet there are persons who will assert that from these strange beginnings emanated the purer faith, which has since enlightened so large a portion of the globe, and who can see through this mass of grossness the type of better things; but *I* dare not venture upon such an analysis—were I to do so, I should merit that beautiful reproach of the poet:

> "And fools rush in where angels dare not tread!"

Let us pass on to subjects more within the

scope of my comprehension. At a short distance, rendered immeasurably long by the nature of the soil to be passed over in order to reach it, is the little *speos* or rock-cut temple of Bet-Oually, only consisting of a pronaos and an adytum of very small dimensions, but bearing on their walls sculptures which are precious from their execution, being of the *good old time* when Rhamses Sesostris was—not King—but Prince Royal of Egypt. They represent his campaigns against the Arabs, and his victorious return to Thebes with captives and spoils in the shape of gold chains, panthers' skins, elephants' teeth, ostriches' feathers, and living lions, monkeys, and giraffes, which he presents to his father, Osirei, the reigning Pharaoh. This is a beautiful little bit of art; and after the glare and grandeur of Kalabschi, it is like refreshing one's eyes with one of the cabinet pictures of the old masters in the Louvre, after returning from seeing the vast crudities of the Versailles galleries.

This morning we visited our last Nubian temple before reaching Philæ, where we expect to be in a few hours. Debod is but of little importance in the scale of architectural beauty, and has never been completed. Its original construction is of considerable antiquity, being about the

period of Ergamenes the Ethiopian, he who founded Dakkeh; but it was progressively adorned down to the time of Augustus, when the work was interrupted. In the interior sanctuary there are no hieroglyphics on the walls; and the stones destined for the completion of the work, but which were never employed, are lying there as if only awaiting the return of the masons to resume operations. The original founder of Debod appears to have had pretensions far beyond the capabilities of the locality, for to this little temple there are what I have not as yet observed in any of the stupendous edifices I have visited,—three propyla! What would I give to behold one of these temples cleared of its rubbish within and without, with its pavement unincumbered by endless layers of dust and broken pottery, its roof disengaged from heaps of ruined huts, its portals unobstructed by blocks of sandstone and granite, its sculptured columns purified from the defacing filth of the bat,—in short, in such order and keeping as render our ruined fanes in England so beautiful as well as so touching in their decay!

CHAPTER XII.

PHILÆ.—RUINS.—AUGUSTAN ERA OF EGYPTIAN ART.—TEMPLE OF ISIS.—PORTRAIT OF CLEOPATRA.—PHARAOH'S BED.—AN ARRIVAL.—RENCONTRE.—DESCENT OF THE CATARACT.—ANOTHER RENCONTRE.—EGYPTIAN PEBBLES.

Es-souan, Dec. 20th.

There is no spot in the whole course of the Nile which we have traversed, that can be compared in beauty with the Island of Philæ,—for, as I have before told you, Egypt is not the land of romantic scenery, and her antique temples have derived no illusory charm from the localities in which they are placed. Sameness characterizes them all; here rolls the river, and there stretches the Desert, and between them rise the solemn propyla, gloomy and grand,—with no sacred grove to shade them, no muffling ivy, no grey lichen to bind together the crumbling walls,—not a weed or blade of grass springing up round the base of the lofty columns to refresh the eye with their wild verdure amidst those

lifeless wildernesses of stone? But at Philæ the grace and softness of nature blends so beautifully with the grandeur of art, as to render the last resting-place of Osiris, like "the green spot on memory's waste," a thing apart — a solitary gem, —a gracious exception to a stern and monotonous rule.

Placed above the confines of the First Cataract, just far enough from it to be beyond the turmoil of its rocks and rapids, the Sacred Isle, calm and smiling, reflects in the smooth water, on whose bosom it appears to float, its belt of bright verdure rising in terraces from the waves, its graceful tufts of palm-trees, and its prodigal confusion of ruins, in lovely contrast to the chaotic masses of black granite and basalt that bound the prospect on either side of the river. As we approached it from the south, the two great propyla of the temple of Isis were the first objects that struck our view; but gradually as we coasted round to its northern extremity, dromos, and colonnade, and peristyle and pronaos unrolled themselves, and lastly, the loveliest feature of all, the small temple known by the name of Pharaoh's Bed, and by some supposed to cover the tomb of Osiris.

Near to that temple we landed. Perhaps, to

preserve inviolate the illusion of Philæ's superior charm, one ought not to land; for then the accomplishment of the prophecy which foretold that "the pomp of Egypt should be destroyed," and the land "made desolate from the Tower of Syene, even unto the border of Ethiopia," be-



comes visible. Ruin effected by the hand of man, more terrible and unsightly than that brought about by the operations of time, stares one in the face all around; and yet sufficient still remains unharmed to show how gloriously beautiful must this place of pilgrimage have appeared when its fanes were all intact, and none

but holy feet were allowed to press the soil, rendered sacred to the Egyptians of old by containing the earthly part of their divinity Osiris. It is the fashion to depreciate the monuments of Philæ by applying to them the term *modern*, which in this part of the world signifies any construction dating from the domination of the Greeks and Romans. The Augustan era of art in Egypt was the glorious eighteenth dynasty, which comprised the great names of the three first Thotmes, (the third of them being the Pharaoh of the Exodus,) of Amenophon, of Osirei, of Rhamses Sesostris, &c. &c.; and it was during the reign of the two latter, that the fine arts attained their highest degree of perfection; and the most sublime and irreproachable of the Pharaonic monuments still extant date from that period. The temples of Philæ can lay no claim to such high antiquity, or such classical perfection; for the oldest portions of them now remaining are the ruins of a little temple dedicated to Athor, on the southern extremity of the island, and a portal, both of them constructed by the last of the native kings of Egypt, Nectanebes, the unfortunate Pharaoh who was conquered and dethroned by the last Persian invasion. The latter of these remnants of a better epoch, flanked by two wings, the work

of the Ptolemies, forms the first propylon of the Great Temple of Isis, the principal edifice of the island, and would escape any eyes but the practised and unerring ones of a Wilkinson or a Champollion; but their science has rescued this morsel from being confounded with the profuse remains of Greek and Roman art, among which it is encrusted, and points out to the notice of strangers the last Pharaonic relic possessed by the sacred island of Philæ.

The confused manner in which the several temples are crowded together, renders it very difficult to distinguish between them; but we at last obtained a tolerably clear conception of the locality, and were enabled to separate the temple of Isis from the lesser edifices, which at first sight appear to form parts of it. This structure possesses two propyla, a pronaos, cella, adytum, and lateral chambers; besides these there are vaults beneath, the entry to which has never yet been discovered; but as Philæ is reputed to be the burial-place of Osiris, it is supposed that his tomb lies still undiscovered in some subterraneous chamber. That a more ancient edifice formerly existed on the same site is certain, from the presence of the remains above alluded to; and from the fact that Philæ and the adjacent

island of Beghé were places of pilgrimage for the ancient Egyptians under the early Pharaohs, as testified by the royal ovals and hieroglyphic legends sculptured upon the rocks in the vicinity, recording the sacred voyage thither of various of the sovereigns. The supposition is, that the first temple was destroyed by the Persian invaders under Darius.

The pronaos of the Temple of Isis is supported upon ten stupendous columns, each surmounted by a different capital, as in the Temple of Esneh, and still bearing distinct remains of the brilliant colours with which they were originally painted. The flat ceiling is embellished with the most elegant designs tinted in blue, green, yellow, black, &c., among which the winged orb is preeminent. The subjects of the bas-reliefs that cover the walls of the various chambers relate to different phases in the lives of Isis and Osiris, and one small upper chamber represents at length the death, embalming, and interment of the god. But perhaps the most interesting part of the remains at Philæ is the portrait of Cleopatra, sculptured upon the walls of the Temple of Isis, and probably done from the life. The face is less transcendently lovely than one imagines that of the royal enchantress to have

been; but, although somewhat heavy, it is undoubtedly handsome—the upper part especially so. There are also portraits of Arsinoe and Berenice, two other Ptolemaic Queens; but Cleopatra alone interested and rivetted my attention.

On either side of the space, intervening between the two propyla, is a lateral structure, each having a colonnade, but presenting such variances and absence of harmony in their architecture, that it is to be presumed they were piece-meal additions of a later date than the great temple. That on the western side possesses the number and disposition of chambers required for the formation of an Egyptian temple in miniature, and is highly decorated in the interior with florid bas-reliefs, representing the birth of Horus, the son of Isis and Osiris. Its colonnade is supported by seven columns, with square capitals, each side of which represents the head of Isis, with cow's ears depending beneath the sacred fillet that binds her forehead. It is therefore to be presumed that this lateral building was a smaller temple—a sort of chapel of ease to the great sanctuary—dedicated, like it, to the tutelary goddess of the place. The opposite structure is faced by a colonnade of ten

columns of a different description and far less beautiful.

All these buildings are the creations of the Ptolemies; but there is a splendid double colonnade of circular pillars, forming a sort of avenue from the great temple to the southern extremity of the island, where I imagine it must or *ought* to have terminated in a flight of steps descending to the water's edge. This was the work of the Roman Emperors, and, like almost all their works in Egypt, was never terminated. A solitary obelisk of sandstone, bearing Greek inscriptions, but no hieroglyphics, stands at the termination of one of those ranges of pillars; its companion was removed by Mr. Bankes many years ago, and carried to England by him. But the most striking monument in Philæ, and that which, in my humble judgment, possesses the most beauty, is the edifice to the east, known by the name of Pharaoh's Bed. This elegant construction bears none of the peculiar features of Egyptian architecture, and, although small, is at once grand and light in its style. It consists only of one chamber, formed by fourteen beautiful pillars of yellow sandstone, with intercolumniations reaching to one-third of their height, supporting a cornice composed of enormous blocks of the

same materials, and with no ceiling but the azure heavens. Compared with the heavy masses of Egyptian structures, the lofty columns of Pharaoh's Bed, showing glimpses of the bright sky between them, appear even more airy and elegant than they really are, and recall to mind the graceful efforts of Grecian art; seen from the river, they form the most striking and attractive feature in the whole island.

An Arab village has, at some time or another, been superimposed upon the roof of the Temple of Isis, but has long since been abandoned, and is now crumbling to the dust. Ruin upon ruin! such a wilderness of stones does the space occupied by the temples exhibit, that it really is a service of danger to scramble through them; and had it not been for the assistance of our sure-footed Arab sailors, and the thoughtful care of Reis Ali, who carried me over all the most difficult places, I think I must have dislocated some of my limbs among the pit-falls and rocking stones that abound. Two headless sphinxes of granite lie prostrate among the ruins; and we found workmen employed in demolishing blocks of hieroglyphicked stone, worth their weight in gold to the lovers of the antique, which we would have gladly carried away, could we have

done so, to have saved them from the desecration that awaits them; for they are to be converted into lime. Verily this is the age of utilitarianism, *even in Egypt!*

All the morning we lingered among the ruins, and then clambered to the summit of the great propylon, from whence we obtained a lovely view of the rock-sprinkled river and the neighbouring island of Beghé, where some fragments of a temple are still visible; and I believe that evening would have found us still there, moralizing in a very edifying manner upon the wrecks of bygone kingdoms and empires that lay scattered at our feet, and literally finding "sermons in stones," had we not descried the English flag flying from the stern of a Cangia that was struggling her way between the First Cataract and the village of Mahatta. Curious to know whom it might contain, we descended from our airy post, and returning to the Dahabieh, steered for Mahatta—about a mile and a half distant—which we reached almost in the same moment with the Cangia in question, each boat firing a salute of double-barrelled guns. The arrival proved to be Mr. H——, of Alexandria, in his own Cangia, and he announced to us that three others were then working their way through the Cataract. Two

of them shortly afterwards made their appearance; and to our infinite satisfaction we found that one of them contained our estimable Quaker friend, Mr. P——, whom we had left an invalid at Cairo, and who has joined company with the Honourable Mr. D——, and Mr. S——, all bound for the place from whence we are returning.

At sunset four English flags were flying in the little port of Mahatta; after our recent isolation in Nubia, such a circumstance made us almost fancy that we must have been at Spit-head! The illusion was increased by Mr. H—— bringing us a file of Times Newspapers, which transported us for awhile from *the times of the Pharaohs and the Ptolemies*, in which we have of late "lived, and moved, and had our being," to the work-a-day world of rail-roads and steam-boats. Messrs. D—, S—, and P—, dined with us in our Dahabieh; and this morning we dispersed; they to revel in the beauties of Philæ—we to make the best of our way to Es-souan.

It had been decided by the Reis of the Cat-aract that our boat should be again lightened of its freight to traverse the rapids, and that we, our servants, and baggage should proceed by land upon asses and dromedaries to Es-souan, while Mohammed, the two Reis's, and as many of the

crew as would be required, were to remain in the Dahabieh. Our way lay across the Desert just skirting the famous granite quarry of Syene, which I have already described to you; and much did I regret that we were completely shut out from seeing the descent of the Swift; for from the certain quantum of danger incurred, it must have been not only a beautiful spectacle but a most exciting one. When the boat neared the rapid, where the principal peril of the descent exists, every man on board prostrated himself on the deck, and simultaneously uttered a prayer aloud—then, as they arose, the bark shot down the boiling torrent with frightful velocity. At the foot of this rapid, a rock rises in the middle of the stream, and at a very short distance beyond, and placed a little to the side of it, there is a small mud island. The great skill of the Reis and Pilot of the Cataract consists in steering the vessel so as to clear the rock (a collision with which appears inevitable, and would involve instant destruction,) and by giving it an oblique impulse, direct its course upon the mud island, where the safety of the boat depends upon its being run ashore. It is afterwards easily extricated and floated into smooth water, and the remainder of the passage of the Cataract is plain

sailing. All this was performed to admiration by Reis Hassan and his colleagues; and the Swift announced her safety by a *feu de joie*, and made a triumphant entry into Es-souan with flags flying, darabookahs playing, sailors shouting forth the noisiest and most joyous of their choruses, and Mohammed and the Reis rending the air with their cheers.

We reached Es-souan just in time to witness the arrival of our boat, and felt, as we re-entered Egypt, that we had, comparatively speaking, returned to the regions of civilization. There we found the Marquis of S——, on his way to the Second Cataract, and were invited by him to breakfast on board his Dahabieh. Few young noblemen have travelled so extensively, or with so much profit, as Lord S——; not content with the usual routine of fashionable touring, he has visited both of the Indies, and has perhaps seen more of life in the East than any European of his age, having not only mixed in all the pomps and ceremonies of the native sovereigns' courts, but traversed the wild Himalayas on foot, and penetrated into far Thibet, to the very frontier of China. The advantages arising from a youth so spent are evident in Lord S——'s conversation; and when one contrasts the manly simpli-

city of manner characterizing a mind that has expanded into early maturity in so enlarged a sphere, with the petty affectations and fineries,—ay, and I will say ignorance,—consequent upon a young man's views of life and experience being limited to the narrow world whose boundaries are Melton, Hyde Park, Almacks, and the Clubs of St. James's Street, one is disposed to wonder that all parents do not follow up their sons' emancipation from College, by sending them to acquire that precious polish of philanthropy which can alone be attained by friction with the varieties of the human race.

We passed the forenoon in revisiting the Island of Elephantina, where I have made the acquisition of some of those pretty agates known in England by the name of Egyptian pebbles; and on our return to the Swift, we were visited by the Turkish governor's secretary, who afterwards sent us a present of a sheep. Lord S—— dined with us; he has just taken his departure by land for Mahatta, and I am scribbling this in all haste, to consign it to the care of Sulieman Effendi, the governor of Es-souan, who has promised to send my dispatches to Cairo by the Pasha's post.

CHAPTER XIII.

KOOM OMBOS.—GHEBEL SILSILIS.—TEMPLE OF EDFOU.—VIEW.—EL KOB.—TOMBS.—BANISHED GHAWAZEE.—SOFIA.—TALLYHO!

On the Nile, Dec. 24, 1845.

Since we quitted Es-souan, part of every day has been employed in visiting a different temple. The first of these was Koom Ombos, one of the few sanctuaries that have been erected on the eastern bank of the river, and among the sculptures of which we have for the first time met with the god Sevek, the Egyptian Saturn, represented with a crocodile's head. The architecture of Koom Ombos is prodigious; nowhere have I seen such enormous blocks of stone as are employed in its construction. It excites a twofold astonishment; first, as to the manner of its creation, and lastly, as to the method resorted to for its destruction. For if one wonders how such masses of stone could ever have been fashioned and raised, one is equally amazed at the deplorable ingenuity that has been employed to level

and mutilate them. The action of fire must have been put into requisition to split the immense blocks of which the temple is composed. Besides the violence of ruthless destroyers, Koom Ombos has suffered much from another cause; for the wall of circumvallation which the ancient Egyptians opposed to the incursions of the Desert having been thrown down, the sand has gradually drifted in upon it, until the once stately edifice is now more than half buried beneath the smooth yellow mounds that have accumulated on all sides. Koom Ombos is a Ptolemaic monument, and only counts two thousand years! I need not tell you, therefore, that it is classed among the depreciated remains of Egyptian art, and by competent judges is considered in the light of a *modern inferiority.*

Our next halt was at Ghebel Silsilis, those marvellous sandstone quarries which have furnished materials for almost all of the monuments of Upper Egypt. They lie for a considerable distance along both sides of the river, which is narrower here than in any other part, and exhibit long galleries cut into the rock from whence were hewn the vast blocks with which the Pharaohs, the Ptolemies, and the Cæsars successively constructed their temples and pa-

laces. There are also excavated tombs facing the river,—one speos, or rock-cut sanctuary, containing bas-reliefs and hieroglyphic inscriptions, dating from the Pharaohs to the eighteenth dynasty,—and various small chapel-like sanctuaries. The quantity of stone that has been excavated to form these immense galleries may be imagined from the fact, that out of it were built the colossal structures of Thebes, the temples of Koom Ombos, of Edfou, and of Esné, besides those of less note which are scattered along both sides of the Nile, and owe their existence to the same inexhaustible source. Here are to be seen traces of the busy idleness of the workmen who were employed in cutting stones from the quarries, in the shape of coarse unfinished outlines of human figures, &c. &c., scratched upon its perpendicular sides, just in the same manner that one sees rude attempts at drawing scrawled in chalk upon dead walls in England. We contented ourselves with exploring the excavations on the western side, and did not even land on the opposite bank of the river; but we saw enough to convince us, that with a little more labour, Ghebel Silsilis might have been converted into a second Petra,—streets, and squares, and arcades exist, and excavations that only require *façades*

to give them the character of temples and dwellings.

Yesterday morning we reached Edfou, the Apollonopolis of the ancient Greeks, and landed after breakfast to visit the temple. It is about a mile from the river side, and the ride to it is (for this country,) rather an agreeable one, through less of dust and more of verdure than is generally to be found in Upper Egypt. The morning air was scented by bean-fields in full bloom; and patches of dhourra, partitioned off by hedges of the Castor-oil plant, tempted our donkeys to many a loitering nibble by the way-side. The temple is dedicated to Aroeris (the Apollo of the Greeks,) and I believe that no *constructed* sanctuary in the valley of the Nile remains so perfect as regards its form and outline; and a more complete idea may be formed from it of the general plan and appearance of those sacred edifices than from the rock-cut temples of Ibsamboul. For Edfou possesses its magnificent propylon intact, opening into a splendid peristyled court surrounded by thirty-two colossal columns, and then follows the pronaos with its mighty pillars in the style of that of Esné. The inner chambers and the sanctuary are now impassable, as the soil, or rather the ruins of Arab villages that have suc-

ceeded one another within the precincts of the temple have accumulated to a height which has more than half buried the columns of the court and pronaos, and has left nothing visible of the great door that leads from the latter into the adytum, but its cornice. A wall of circumvallation originally surrounded the temple, and is still nearly perfect, and covered on both sides with sacred sculptures. On the roof of this sanctuary there is a populous village; lambs bleating, dogs barking, cocks crowing, children squalling, and all the *not* delightful sights and sounds that characterize rural life on the banks of the Nile. I rode my donkey into the midst of it, and looking down from thence into the great court, beautiful still in its degraded state, figured to myself how it must have appeared, when the priests of Apollo in all their sacerdotal splendour, received the princes of the land within that sacred enclosure, and the votaries of the god flocked from far and near to witness the pagan rites enacted there.

Again have I found that my admiration, based upon ignorance, has led me all astray in my judgment of Edfou, which I frankly own to you excited in me sentiments of the most unqualified approbation and delight. The old story of dating

only from the time of the Ptolemies applies to Edfou as it does to Koom Ombos and Esné, and detracts from all its merits; and Champollion, whose authority is not to be questioned on such a subject, says of it: "Ce monument imposant par sa masse porte cependant l'empreinte de la décadence de l'art Egyptien sous les Ptolemées, au regne desquels il appartient tout entier; ce n'est plus la simplicité antique; on y remarque une recherche et une profusion d'ornement bien maladroit, et qui marque la transition entre la noble gravité des monuments Pharaoniques et le papillotage fatiguant et de si mauvais goût du temple d'Esné, construit du temps des Empereurs."

This sweeping censure of course refers more to the sculptures than to the architecture of the Ptolemaic temples, for bas-reliefs and hieroglyphic legends were the peculiar province of Champollion, and interested him far more than the proportions of propyla and pronaos. Those of Edfou are in profusion, and to my unpractised eye appear to be beautifully executed, the greater part of them in the style termed by the Italians *distemperatura*. Columns, walls, ceilings, all are covered with gigantic figures, and more delicately proportioned mythological subjects, relating of

course to the tutelary deity, who is here represented by a triad composed of the god Harhat, (the Egyptian Apollo,) the goddess Athor, (the Egyptian Venus,) and their son Horsont Tho, the support of the world. But do not imagine that I am either going to edify or to weary you with a detail of these strange representations—I shall only say that the *tout ensemble* of Edfou is magnificent; and that notwithstanding the dicta of the learned in such matters, I am still inclined to avow that as far as regards *temple-making*, the Ptolemies are good enough for me!

We ascended by a good interior staircase to the summit of the noble propylon, and obtained from thence not only an accurate outline of the whole structure, but enjoyed one of the most extensive views I have yet seen over the river and surrounding country. But when I questioned myself whether such a view would be considered beautiful in another country, I was forced to admit that its loveliness is only comparative. The aspect of the land of Egypt presents an eternal struggle for pre-eminence between the two elements of which it is composed—the sand of the desert and the mud of the river—in those parts where the latter has prevailed, fertility spreads its green mantle

around, and clothes the earth with abounding harvests and towering groves. Such is the case in the district surrounding Edfou, where, on both sides of the stream, the valley assumes the character of a plain, and the distant chains of the Libyan and Mokatan hills form the framework to a bright picture of cultivation, instead of a dreary one of desolation.

Later in the day we stopped at El Kob, the ancient Elethya, which in days of old was a most important place, as being the point of communication between the Nile and the Port of Berenice on the Red Sea. All that remains of the ancient town is the stupendous wall of unburnt bricks that surrounded it, and formed a barrier against the sands of the Desert; the wall remains, but the city for whose protection it was raised is swept off the face of the earth! At about the distance of a mile from the site of Elethya, there are mummy-pits, and sepulchral grottoes cut into the rock and most curiously painted. The learned in hieroglyphics assign to them a very great antiquity; but we, who are unable to decypher the legends and inscriptions they contain, can only take these assertions upon trust. The subjects of many of the paintings relate to agricultural pursuits, probably to the professions

and habits of the several tenants of the tombs; and it is curious to observe from these old designs, how few changes the lapse of more than three thousand years has effected in the economy of rural life in Egypt. The corn was sown, and reaped, and trodden out in the same manner *then* that it *now* is; and it would appear that the ancient Egyptians were in the habit of lightening their labour by songs, even in the selfsame way practised by the Arabs of to-day; for among the paintings in the tombs of El Kob, is one representing the treading out of corn by oxen, to which are affixed the words of the song addressed to them by their drivers. Champollion has given a translation of this song; it contains a simple but logical argument encouraging the brutes to labour, by impressing upon them the fact, that in effecting their master's interest they are securing their own, as a portion of the grain they are beating out will be reserved for their own food. Each succeeding verse is followed by a chorus that is repeated exactly in the same manner now in use among the Arabs of Egypt, who can accomplish no labour without the adjunct of music.

This morning, at Esneh, I returned to the temple to look for the famous Zodiac, and found it in one of the compartments of the ceiling, quite

perfect, and as fresh as if painted yesterday. Notwithstanding that I am quite wrong in my admiration of this fragment of a temple, I have not altered my first opinion of it, and it still appears to me to be both a grand and beautiful specimen of architecture; but I am not going to give you a second edition of my false impressions.

Did I tell you that Esneh is the head-quarter to which the *Ghawazee*, or dancing women of Cairo, were banished by order of the Viceroy? The government allows them house-rent free, and to each individual three loaves of bread and one piaster ten paras per diem (about twopence English), upon which, in this cheap country, they contrive to live very well. Of the original Cairo-bred Ghawazee, only two now remain, and one of these, the celebrated Sofia, the favourite of Abbas Pasha (Mahommed Ali's grandson, and the governor of Cairo,) who kept a separate establishment for her, before the race became proscribed, now lives in Esneh. As this woman was considered one of the most accomplished Ghawazee in Egypt, I was very curious to see her, and we therefore desired Mohammed to arrange that she should exhibit herself, and some specimens of her talents, to us; premising that English taste cannot tolerate those wanton displays in

which the Eastern dancing-women sometimes indulge, and which form the most attractive part of their art in the opinion of their own country-people.

Accordingly we went to Sofia's residence, and were shown into a mat-covered room with a long range of cushions at one side, where a female attendant brought us Narghilés to smoke, and a bottle of perfumed oil, which she poured upon my hands and tried to persuade me to rub over my face and throat. Presently four young women arrived, wearing *anterees* and trousers of printed calico, and Egyptian Fez caps, ornamented with golden *Ckoors*, their persons bedecked with ear-rings and bracelets, and rings of gold and silver in plenty. These were the musicians; for, as soon as they had seated themselves on the floor, a *Darabookah* was handed to each, and they commenced chanting their Arab chorusses, and beating time upon their instruments with the palm of one hand and the fingers of the other, which produces the effect of base and treble. After a lapse of twenty minutes, the nymph herself entered, quite in a theatrical manner, enveloped from head to foot in a large dark mantle, which she threw aside, and gracefully saluted

me by touching my hand, and then kissing her own and carrying it to her forehead.

Sofia's dress was so handsome that it merits to be described;—besides, as the fashion of it is that of the great ladies of Cairo, I think it will interest you. She wore first a chemise of some thin white material, with loose sleeves embroidered round the edge hanging over her hands; then a large pair of crimson silk trousers so long and wide that they entirely concealed her bare feet; then came a garment like the Turkish *anteree*, descending to the feet before, hanging in a train behind, and opening at the sides, with long sleeves open from the wrist to the elbow, and falling back so as to display those of the chemise beneath. This dress was made of crimson damask, and embroidered all round the edge with black braiding, and was confined—not at the waist, but over the hips, with an Indian shawl, wound two or three times round, and knotted before. The last garment was a jacket, reaching only to the waist, with half-sleeves, made of an exceedingly rich stuff of dark-blue silk, embroidered all over, in a running pattern, with gold, and edged with gold braiding and buttons. Three large silver amulet-cases, containing charms, were hung over the shawl girdle. The head-

dress is the prettiest part of the Egyptian costume, and Sofia's was exceedingly rich. Her hair was divided into twenty or thirty small braids hanging over her shoulders, to the end of each of which were affixed three silk cords strung with gold coins of various sizes. Two rows of gold coins as large as half-crown pieces, laid close together, encircled her forehead; and at each temple depended a cluster of smaller ones, with an agate ornament in the middle. The back of her head was covered with a small Egyptian Fez, ornamented with a large *Ckoors* of solid gold, and bound on by a handkerchief of embroidered crape. She wore two necklaces of large gold coins, thickly strung together, and each individual piece of money depending from a massive ornament in the form of a fish: one of these necklaces was long, and the other one just encircled her throat; and between them was a string of beads of Egyptian agates as large as birds' eggs, and strung together with golden links. Her ear-rings were of gold filigree, in the shape of flowers; and her bracelets, of which she wore several, of massive gold and silver. We computed that she carried about three hundred and fifty pounds on her person in coins alone, without including her other ornaments.

Sofia is still a young and a pretty woman; and, after the dark visages I have of late been accustomed to see, she appeared to me to be comparatively fair—a clear *brunette,* with elongated black eyes, rendered still longer and darker by the application of *kohl* that encircled them, and aquiline features, much resembling those of the Pasta — such as she was in her best days, — and pretty hands tipped with henna and covered with rings. Before standing up to dance, she asked for *tchorba* to be brought to her, which I imagined to be sherbet; but on tasting it I found that it was aniseed liqueur of the most ardent quality, and hot as liquid fire. Sofia, however, tossed off a large bumper of it without making a grimace, and, to my consternation, finished the bottle before her exhibition was over, without appearing to be in the least affected by such an excess.

As to her dancing or rather pantomime, nothing can be less graceful or more monotonous; striking her silver castanets, sometimes with her arms half raised, sometimes with her hands stretched out before her, she shuffled about upon a very small space of ground without executing anything like a step; in short, she put every part of her body into movement except her feet. She

had been warned to restrain herself, and she did, for there was no absolute violation of decorum in her performance; but in the sample she gave us of her skill, there was neither poetry, nor imagination, nor ideality, — it was "of the earth, earthy,"—the nymph was a clod of clay, and her inspirations were not warmed by one spark of the *feu sacré*, which sometimes for a moment converts clay into something little less than divine!

As we were passing by a garden-wall on our way back to the Dahabieh, a fine fox jumped up almost under our feet, and scampered away as if a pack of hounds had been at his heels. A royal salute from a double-barrelled gun was fired —not at him, but over his head—in token of the respect which the sight of his brush inspired; and as he made his way towards the Libyan hills, scared by such unwonted honours, the echoes of Esneh for the first time resounded to the inspiriting tones of a genuine Leicestershire Tallyho!—and our Arabs, delighting in noise, and taken by the novelty of the word, quickly caught it up, and shouted again and again, TALLYHO!

CHAPTER XIV.

ARAB GREETINGS. — CHRISTMAS CHEER. — TIPSY TURKEY. — THE VOCAL MEMNON. — MEDINET HABOU. — PHARAONIC ARCHITECTURE.— EGYPTIAN MYTHOLOGY.— THE RHAMESSEIUM.— TOMBS. — THE ASSASSIEF. — RELICS. — BIBAN EL MOLUK.— BELZONI'S TOMB.— THE HALL OF BEAUTY.— BRUCE'S TOMB.— THE HARPERS.— ALLEGORIES.— AMULETS.

Thebes, Christmas-day.

Last night we anchored off Luxor, and immediately opposite to the splendid colonnade of that palace-temple which had become a ruin before the blessed era commenced of which to-day is the anniversary.

I had no sooner left my cabin this morning, than, to my surprise, Reis Ali, his son Salem, Hadgee Mustapha, and all our sailors, came one after the other to wish me, in very good English, "a merry Christmas!" Mohammed had been tutoring them all yesterday to learn the words by heart, and he told me to-day that some of the men got up three times in the night, and awoke

him to hear them repeat their lesson; so fearful were they of not making themselves understood by me. They succeeded, however, to admiration; and I was both amused and touched by the earnestness of their salutation, and by hearing those familiar sounds echoed by Arab lips to a Christian stranger in the far solitude of Thebes.

Our Christmas-day was rendered very happy by receiving a large budget of letters forwarded to us by the English Consul at Cairo. They are the first letters that have reached us from Europe since we have been in Egypt, and their contents for a while cheated us into the belief that we were not divided by so many lands and seas from those most dear to us, and whose thoughts we knew would be with us this day. We have kept up the good old English custom of good cheer at Christmas time, as far as lay in our power, by giving no less than three plum-pudding dinners to-day—one to our crew; a second to the Reis, his son, our cook, Dragoman, and servants; and the third to ourselves—all of them excellent, thanks to Mohammed's good catering. I never tasted a better turkey than he gave us; and, upon complimenting him on its great delicacy, I learned from him the Egyptian secret of rendering the flesh particularly tender. Half an hour before the

bird is killed, a glass of brandy is poured down its throat, which produces complete intoxication, and the flesh of the tipsy turkey acquires a tenderness superior to that which is produced even by long keeping — a system that would be impracticable in this climate. This method of condemning the unhappy turkeys to go out of the world in a state of Moslem reprobation, is a curious bearing out of the " die and be d—d " principle.

Signor Castellare visited us in the evening, and sent me a present of fresh butter—a great dainty in this part of the world ; albeit I cannot taste it, as it is made of buffaloe's milk, to the flavour of which I cannot reconcile myself. As I have told you how turkeys are made tender in Egypt, I may as well tell you also how butter is churned. The milk is put into a skin precisely similar to those used by the water-carriers at Cairo, and shaken by two persons until the butter is formed, when it is separated from the butter-milk, washed, and melted down into jars; this butter, here called Ghee, has always a strong taste of the skin, but it is nevertheless very good for culinary purposes.

December 26th.

While we were at breakfast this morning, the Turkish Government Agent paid us a visit, and

partook of coffee and pipes; he afterwards sent us a present of a goose and some Turkish bread, and we returned the compliment with English gunpowder. After breakfast we crossed over to the western bank of the Nile, in order to commence our exploration of Thebes, by visiting Medinet Habou. On our way thither we rode by the two colossal statues, gigantic as those that guard the portals of Ibsamboul, which are seated on the plain of Thebes, their backs to the Libyan mountains, their faces turned towards the river, looking like the ruins of another world. The



northernmost of these colossi is generally admitted to be the Vocal Statue of Memnon; the

fabulous attributes of which have been sung and cited by the poets and sages of antiquity, and are worthy of the beautiful inventions which invest even the grosser portions of the Greek mythology with such a poetical charm. The so-called Memnon, however, is, according to Sir Gardner Wilkinson, the Pharaoh Amunoph the Third; and its stupendous companion is, in all probability, his brother, who reigned at the same time with himself; but the latter supposition is merely a conjecture of my own. The Vocal Statue, silent now as the Desert in which it stands, has been so defaced that not a feature has escaped the general destruction; yet the outline of the figure remains uninjured, and in its calm majesty is imposing beyond the power of words to convey. The lower part of the statue is hewn out of one block of sandstone; and the legs still bear the ancient Greek inscriptions, that testify to monarchs, and men of science from distant lands, having heard those musical sounds which caused the statue to receive its name. The upper part is composed of five layers of stone in blocks, cemented together as in the walls of an edifice: and this singular difference between the two parts would appear to bear out the supposition advanced by some authors that

the statue of Memnon was originally formed of one block of stone, and that it had been rent in two, and the upper portion destroyed by an earthquake; for the piecemeal upper part looks like a restoration much more than like an original creation. The other colossus is cut out of one enormous block of stone, and its proportions and attitude are precisely similar to those of the famous Memnon. The appearance of these two gigantic guardians of the plain of ruins, which have immoveably maintained their posts amidst the transmutations of more than three thousand years, has in it something both awful and sublime. Empires, and dynasties, and races, have been swept away, as it were, from their feet, and have vanished "like shadows of the night;" and century following century has been engulphed in the great Ocean of Eternity, even as the waves of the Nile, rolling onward before their eyes, empty themselves into the sea—and still they have remained unchanged, like the personification of Inexorable Fate glaring with frightful calm upon the ruined fabric of human happiness and prosperity. They look like remnants of another world—the work of a race of beings wholly different from those that now people the earth; they would almost reconcile me to a be-

lief in the reality of the Pre-adamite Sultans! Between the spot they occupy and the site of Medinet Habou, the fragments of other colossi and of sphinxes are scattered about—wrecks of the glories of old Thebes—and like the fossil fragments of animals, whose species have long since become extinct, and whose quondam existence is known to us only by those incomplete remains, enabling us to form a judgment of what the *whole* must have been in a perfect state.

From thence we came to Medinet Habou, a beautiful *pasticcio* of the Pharaohs, the Ptolemies, and the Cæsars; a mixed monument, so rich in ornament that the mind becomes bewildered in endeavouring either to class its various parts, or to retain them in the memory. Temples and palaces are mingled together in tantalizing confusion, amidst the ruins and rubbish of modern towns and villages, which have been built among them, and whose crumbling remains now choke up the antique columns and peristyles, until scarcely more than the capitals of some of them are to be seen. The most ancient portion of Medinet Habou is the palace-temple, constructed by the Pharaohs, Thothmes the First and Second, and Thothmes Mœris, the third of that name (the Pharaoh of the Exodus), fifteen hundred

years before the Christian era. The most beautiful portion is the palace-residence of Rhamses Meiamoum, with its splendid courts, enriched with painted colonnades, and ceilings of azure, studded with what once were golden stars. The famous bas-reliefs exhibit the warlike deeds of the above-named Pharaoh, who, like his celebrated ancestor, Rhamses Sesostris, was one of the greatest heroes of antique Egypt. The execution of these sculptures, and of their accompanying ovals, or cartouches, is so fine that it has caused me to cool a little in my admiration of Esneh and Edfou; but still it has not imbued me with a real, downright enthusiastic taste for Egyptian art. Grand and colossal as is the architecture of the Pharaonic temples, they excite in me more wonder than delight; and, however beautiful may be the execution of their decorative bas-reliefs and hieroglyphics, I can see only in them the same monotonous delineation of figures in profile, where drawing and perspective are equally set at defiance, the same subjects of endless offerings made by kings to gods, the same monstrous mythology and absurd symbols, which appear to me far less calculated to have produced feelings of religious exaltation than to brutify the mind that could stoop to the worship

of idols under such revolting forms. Whatever may have been the philosophy hidden under these emblems, the outward shapes it assumed—which is all of it that has been revealed to us—possessed not the poetry of the Grecian mythology (so well calculated to enthrall the imagination, although it could not elevate the soul,) to redeem it from the grosser tendencies of a worship whose deities are represented as indulging in all the passions, and committing all the crimes that debase sinful human nature. We can look upon the all but divine image of Olympian Jove, and forget, in the contemplation of his god-like form, the long catalogue of his human frailties; we can understand that men might bow down before the imposing majesty of that marble brow, and adore, even while they knew it to be the work of mortal hands. And thus it is with all the sculptured gods of Greece, into which the spirit of beauty was so artfully infused as to render them fit emblems of a divine essence. But who can gaze upon the absurd semblance of Ammon Ra, the ram-headed divinity, with any feeling save that of repugnance? what sentiment does his sheepish face inspire beyond one of derision? and can any persons, in their sober senses, glance over the horrid hybrids of the Egyptian Pan-

theon, and either seriously say that they were formed to subjugate the mind of man, or think that they offer the shadow of an excuse for image-worship?

To the north of Medinet Habou, other ruins are scattered over the plain. Gournou, the palace-residence of Osirei, is there; and the nobler pile of the so-called Memnonium, by some of the learned declared to be the tomb of Osymandyas, but, according to Wilkinson and Champollion's readings of the inscriptions on its walls, now known to be the Rhamesseium, or House of Rhamses, erected by the great Pharaoh of that name, and his son and successor. And there lies the wonderful colossus, the finest statue ever produced of Rhamses Sesostris, cast down from its throne, and shivered into huge fragments, by the spoilers of Thebes. Formed of one block of the beautiful rose-coloured granite of Es-souan, its bulk may be imagined by the fact, that it weighed, when entire, eight hundred and eighty-seven tons five hundred weight and a half, and measured twenty-two feet across the shoulders. After the sphinx at Ghizeh, this is the most gigantic specimen of sculpture that even Egyptian art, so famous for stupendous conceptions, ever produced. The style of what remains of the

Rhamesseium is very *grandioso.* There are the ruins of a peristyled court, with pilasters, against which are placed colossal standing statues, with their arms crossed over their bosoms, and bearing in one hand the crosier, and in the other the flagellum: and there is a noble hypostyle, or hall of columns, covered with the usual sculptures; and part of the roof still entire, formed of enormous blocks of sandstone. And what is rare, there are no Arab hovels encumbering these fine remains; and the only rubbish scattered about, consists in the vast fragments that have been rent from their original positions, and lie here and there in ruinous confusion, mingled with monstrous portions of the wonderful statue, each morsel large enough to furnish materials for the labours of a modern sculptor. Amidst the ruins of Western Thebes, neither obelisks nor avenues of sphinxes remain, and it is therefore a question if any of the former ever existed there; the sight of two mutilated sphinxes of *breccia* overturned and prostrate in the dust, convinced me that there had once been those noble adjuncts to the approach to a temple on the western bank.

*   *   *   *   *

From the palaces of the ancient Thebans to their tombs, the transition is short; within the

bowels of the calcareous Libyan rock are excavated those fine sepulchral chambers, from the painted walls of which are to be gathered such curious details of the habits and customs of the ancient Egyptians — strange and solemn pages which unfold to the curious traveller's eye knowledge that he would in vain seek to obtain from books. There the domestic life of the dweller in the tomb is revealed — his pursuits and pleasures are set forth—all that surrounded him in life is faithfully delineated in glowing colours in these abodes of death, which the pencil and chisel have equally been called in requisition to beautify and to charm away from the gloom that attaches to the idea of a sepulchre. One would imagine from the labour bestowed upon these tombs that the former population of Thebes had had no employment that was not connected with death, and that they had passed their lives in preparing a receptacle for their lifeless bodies, from which decay, with its "effacing fingers," and the silent, restless worm, twin sister of corruption, were to be triumphantly excluded. There, in some brightly-pictured hall, was deposited the daintily packed mummy, the earthly casket from which the immortal soul had fled, surrounded by all the inanimate objects that had

embellished the existence of the living being, awaiting the prescribed time when the spirit and the flesh were to be once more reunited, and the mummy become man again! Strange but consoling belief, to which is attributable the extraordinary arts resorted to by the ancient Egyptians, to beautify their tombs and to preserve their dead bodies from decay and disfigurement! Three thousand years was the period allotted for the soul to perform the various migrations to which she was condemned during her banishment from her first earthly tenement; but if before the expiration of that time the tomb should be violated, and its embalmed tenant destroyed, then the soul would be sentenced to perpetual exile in the bodies of living creatures of an inferior order in the scale of creation.

This then is the history of those strongholds cut into the living rock—those endless cerements so cunningly disposed and so carefully enclosed in the solid mummy-chest. And yet, that the wisdom of the Egyptians was but foolishness—all their precautions vain—all their cares defeated—let the Necropolis of old Thebes, with its yawning, rifled sepulchres, and its wilderness of scattered bones, tell! The Arabian Caliphs were the first disturbers of the Egyptian tombs,

which they broke open to seek for buried treasures. Desecrators of all nations have succeeded them; and now, so completely have the graves been made to give up their dead, there is scarcely an entire mummy to be obtained for love or money at Thebes.

The tombs of the Assassief, the first into which we entered, are wholly distinct from the tombs of the kings, having been the private sepulchres of the rich Thebans. The largest and finest of them was excavated for the priest and prophet, Petamenoph, and his family, whose name and titles are sculptured upon a fine gateway of rose-coloured granite, erected by him at Medinet Habou. The approach to the Assassief is through a valley in the desert, where nothing but sands and rock are to be seen below, and the intense blue of the sunny skies above; and the way lies across what must have been the ancient Necropolis of Thebes; a dreary tract, honeycombed with a series of pitfalls, through which one risks to tumble head foremost into the rifled catacombs beneath. The entrance into some of the tombs is through a handsome doorway, ornamented with sculpture and painting, but in others it is through an aperture in the rock, like the mouth of an oven; and I was obliged to crawl

into one of them upon my hands and knees, and to effect my entry into another by lying down upon my back, and being drawn in, head foremost. The interiors of them consist of various chambers and long galleries, excavated in the rock, the walls and ceilings of which are covered with paintings, and in some instances with sculptures. At the furthermost extremity of the chambers in each tomb, small apertures, closed up with a stone, lead to the catacomb beneath it, where the mummies were deposited, but where they no longer remain, having nearly all been torn from their dark resting-place to satisfy the curiosity and cupidity of those, who, in the pursuit of science or of gain, have not scrupled to violate the sanctuary of the dead, and scatter their bones to the winds. The paintings in these tombs are very curious, as affording one a clear insight into the every-day life of the wonderful people, whose work they were. In one of them I found the perfect delineation of a hunting scene, the hounds drawn with great spirit and vigour; in another Mohammed cleverly detached two pieces of the wall for me, each fragment containing a painted head, evidently that of a Jewish captive, from the peculiar physiognomy and form of the beard.

But the stench of the bats at last fairly drove

me out of those sepulchral halls, in some of which, however, whole families of Arabs have taken up their abode, and eke out a livelihood by selling to travellers the relic they have rifled from the mummy pits. We were beset through the whole district by men and boys all loaded with their ghastly merchandize, some carrying a swathed leg and foot over one arm, others offering a basket full of hands, black and dried up, but the nails perfect and deeply tinted with red. Others again offered for sale less revolting spoils, such as scarabæi, small porcelain images, necklaces of beads found upon the mummies, and various little articles placed with them in the tomb, many of which I purchased. The ground is strewed everywhere with skulls, backbones, limbs torn from their cerements in the search for papyri, scarabæi, &c. &c.; and the poor Arabs use the mummy cases and clothes for fuel. Fancy one of those half-naked wretches stirring up the embers in his miserable oven with the shank of a Pharaoh! In one of the huts of these poor people our guide pointed out to us a hole in the ceiling through which we distinguished two untouched mummies, (not in cases but merely rolled up in cerecloths in the manner employed for embalming the lower orders), lying side by side

across the beams like stop-gaps! Could the proud Thebans have foreseen the strange uses to which their dead bodies would one day be applied, think you that they would have put into practice the arts they used to cheat corruption of its prey? —and would they not have preferred the natural process of becoming quietly resolved into dust to occupying the Arab's fragment basket, or even the more distinguished position of the best glass-case in a Royal Museum?

December 29th.

But it is at the tombs of the Kings, called by the Arabs Biban el Moluk, that the art of sepulture has been carried to its highest degree of perfection by the ancient people of this land. Even the site chosen for the last abodes of their native Kings shows how deeply the Egyptians were imbued with a sense of suitableness—if I may so express myself—in all that concerned the solemn occupation of their lives (which truly may be said to have been passed in a preparation for death), and there is something even poetical in the analogy between the locality selected, and the purpose for which it was devoted.

The way to the Royal tombs lies through a long and winding valley, or narrow gorge, closed in on either side by the calcareous Lybian rocks,

so utterly barren and dreary, so destitute of even a blade of grass, a weed, or a thorn to give it a semblance of life, that Nature herself appears to be dead there. Not the hum of an insect is to be heard in the air, not even a lizard to be seen darting amongst the loose stones of the rocky pathway; once, as we advanced, we saw two ravens hovering over our heads, but they did not descend—even they, the funereal ravens, flew far away from that scene of utter lifelessness. Some writer upon Egypt has aptly observed that the approach to the tombs of the Kings may be likened to the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and the idea is a happy one; gloomy, stern, and dreary, with no perspective, save the dark sepulchre, that desolate tract fully realized my conceptions of the solemn passage that leads from the bright and busy world to the cold and silent tomb. And as I cast my eyes upwards and beheld the deep azure of the sunny sky above, shedding warmth and light even upon the gloomy gorge below, it seemed to me a glorious type of those heavenly hopes that alone sustain the departing soul through the dim terrors of that path which we all must tread—the closing steps of our earthly pilgrimage!

The valley of Biban el Moluk terminates in a

long ridge of solid rock, in the face of which are pierced the several entrances to the Royal tombs; but as, in order to reach each of those sepulchral gates, a flight of steps must be descended, they are not to be distinguished until one is close to them. The first into which we entered is that known by the name of Belzoni's Tomb, being the one opened in 1817, by that enterprizing traveller, and in which he discovered the beautiful alabaster sarcophagus, which was taken to England, and purchased by Sir John Soane. This was the sepulchre of the Pharaoh Osirei, the father of Rhamses Sesostris, and is perhaps the most beautiful of all the tombs of western Thebes, from the size of its galleries and chambers, and the character and preservation of its painted walls and ceilings, wheron are depicted not only those mythological mysteries which I do not pretend to decypher or comprehend, but whole series of paintings representing the domestic habits of the ancient Egyptians, their agricultural pursuits, their games, amusements, punishments, &c. &c., many of which are astonishingly similar to the customs and habits of the present natives of the land.

Belzoni's Tomb is entered by two long flights of degraded steps, leading to an extensive gallery,

the walls and ceiling of which are covered with paintings and legends in the sacred character, beautifully executed. At the end of the gallery is another descent of steps leading to various chambers, large and small, all equally rich and interesting in their decoration, and preserving a vividness of colouring truly miraculous, when one remembers that they were executed thirty-three centuries ago, and that they must then have been painted by torch light. At last we reached a larger and loftier chamber than any we had yet seen, having an arched roof,—the first arch we have found among the ancient architecture of this country,—and here our guide, wisely judging that the wax-lights and torches we had brought with us would be insufficient to give us a general *coup d'œil* of the locality, set fire to a pile of dried brushwood, of which he keeps a provision there for that purpose, and the merry blaze it threw around lighted up every corner of the chamber, and revealed at once its proportions, the brilliant embellishments of its walls, and the splendid Zodiac with which its ceiling is enriched. This is the chamber named by Belzoni the Hall of Beauty—and well named—and here it was that he discovered the alabaster sarcophagus of Osirei; but the mortal remains of the great Pharaoh had

been cast out of it by some previous molester of the dead, and the only mummy found in the tomb was that of a bull. Beyond the Hall of Beauty are other chambers, evidently never finished, the walls being covered with the outlines of designs traced out in black ink, and intended to have been either coloured or sculptured; the corrections of the master's hand are here and there apparent, where the drawing had been faultily executed. So fresh do these spirited outlines look, so new and white is the appearance of the walls, that one expects to find in some corner the artist's apparatus, left there after the day's work, to be resumed when he returns to-morrow. To-morrow! between *it* and *the yesterday,* when he laid down his pencil, a chasm of more than three thousand years has intervened, and in its dark abyss have been engulphed the wisdom, the glory, the science, and the arts of old Egypt!

The next tomb to which we were conducted was that of Rhamses the Third, opened by Bruce eighty years ago, and named after him, "Bruce's Tomb." The disposition of its chambers, galleries, and staircases, is much the same as in the tomb of Osirei, but the paintings are more defaced, with the exception of those that adorn

a number of small lateral chambers, or cabinets, opening on either side out of the great gallery. In one of these we found the celebrated Harpers, delineated with a grace and spirit which I have not seen in any other Egyptian painting. The form of the harps is elegant in the extreme, infinitely more beautiful than the instruments of the present day, and the attitude of the musicians such as one might imagine the Royal Psalmist's to have been when sweeping the chords in one of his moments of inspiration. In another of these cabinets we found representations of various articles of Egyptian furniture, such as beautiful arm-chairs, sleeping-couches, shaped very much like our *chaises longues*, with a flight of steps to ascend to them, such as are to be seen in every English bedroom, and a wooden support for the head, exactly like those now in use among the Nubians; tables, with lions' paws for feet; elegant foot-stools, &c. &c. Again, in others, the whole economy of the household is depicted,—the butcher slaughtering the ox, the cook cutting up joints of meat, the cauldron suspended over the fire, the beggars waiting at the door to receive their portions. And scenes of husbandry too are there,—men tilling the ground, oxen yoked to the plough, labourers casting the seed over their

heads into the furrows, others reaping and bringing in the harvest,—scenes of active life in the silent mansions of the dead!

The entrance to the tomb, No. 9, is of so gradual and easy a descent, that I was enabled to ride my donkey through its long and spacious gallery to the first chambers The distribution of the various rooms is much the same as in the two foregoing tombs, and in these, as well as in three others which we visited afterwards, we found the furthermost chambers still unfinished; for it was the custom of the Pharaohs to commence building their sepulchres as soon as they succeeded to the throne, and to continue adding to, and embellishing them, during their whole lifetime; so that death generally found them with the work incomplete, and thus it remained.

The eastern panels of the chambers and corridors of these tombs are covered with a long series of paintings representing the progress of the sun in the upper hemisphere (the image of the king during his lifetime), and on the opposite or western panels, the progress of the sun in the lower hemisphere (the image of the king after his death). Besides which there are innumerable representations of the rewards and punishments awarded to the soul after death,—a psychological

system demonstrating the truth of all that the ancients have advanced respecting the Egyptian doctrine on the immortality of the soul, and its eternal welfare being the principal aim and object of human life.

By the time we had explored six of the royal tombs, the fatigue incidental to such an undertaking, added to the close and suffocating atmosphere, rendered more oppressive by the smoke of our torches, and the dust raised by so many persons stumbling over heaps of rubbish, quite exhausted me, and I was obliged to repose a long time in the air and sunshine, before I could undertake the long ride back to our Dahabieh. Reis Ali (who is quite a patriarch in his bearing and feelings, and takes as much anxious care of us as a hen does of her chickens, never allowing us to go on shore without accompanying us,) unwound his turban on seeing me unwell, and taking from its folds an amulet, put it into my hand, declaring that it would restore me sooner than anything else; and when I recovered, he entreated me so earnestly to wear it about me all day, that I have complied with his request. These Egyptian amulets, or Fetiches, are composed of certain verses of the Koran, containing the name and attributes of God, sewed up in a little red leather

case, and are considered by Mahometans to be sovereign safeguards against the Evil Eye, and restorative charms for all sorts of other evils. But it is almost an unheard of stretch of charity for a Moslem to suffer these talismans to be applied to Christians, and knowing this, I feel doubly grateful to our worthy Reis Ali for sacrificing his religious prejudices to his kindly feelings.

I had intended to have given you the whole of Thebes in this letter, but I find that I have already rendered it so bulky, that it will be impossible to squeeze Karnak into it, even in the form of a postscript. So I shall close it now, nor wait until I have seen that wonder of wonders to expedite my dispatch !

CHAPTER XV.

KARNAK.—HYPOSTYLE OF KARNAK.—AVENUES OF SPHINXES.—CAMBYSES.—THE PERSIAN CONQUEST.—WESTERN THEBES.—REFLECTIONS.

Thebes, Dec. 31, 1845.

We reserved Karnak for the termination of our week at Thebes—and rightly we did so—for had we commenced with it, we should have found all else mean and diminutive in comparison. No, never did human imagination conceive, or human hands execute, so stupendous a work! The effect it produced upon me at first view, was that of absolute stupor; and the longer I contemplated the giant structures of Karnak, the more I felt impressed with the belief that the men who created them were not like the races who now people the earth; they must have been Titans—giants—beings who rode upon Mammoths, and would have made a lap-dog of an elephant! and two days passed in examining its details, so far from familiarizing me with the grandeur of the

place, has only served to increase my wonder and amazement—ay, and I will *now* say *admiration*, of this master-piece of Pharaonic architecture. Two days are absolutely necessary to afford one a just idea of Karnak; the first day bewilderment seizes upon all one's faculties—the second, one is enabled to analyze and admire: but weeks and months might be passed there, and new beauties, and new wonders, be discovered each succeeding day.

I thought that Ibsamboul had filled the measure of my astonishment at the prodigies of Egyptian art, but what is it compared to Karnak? —to that confusion of stupendous structures, amidst which the sublime hypostyle rears its lofty columns in gigantic symmetry; a colossus amidst colossi! Here the eye wanders from marvel to marvel, from obelisk to propylon, from long avenues of shattered sphinxes, to prostrate statues and ruined sanctuaries, and yet always returns to that matchless hall with increasing admiration. Nothing that remains of the architecture of ancient Greece or Rome, can vie with the tranquil majesty of the scene that presents itself, as approaching the ruins of Karnak by the great western entrance that faces the river, the eye pierces through a long vista of propyla, colon-



Bon de Bussierre del.

Hullmandel & Walton lithographers

RUINS OF THEBES — TEMPLE OF KARNAK

nades, peristyles, and obelisks, following each other in almost endless succession, and terminated by a distant perspective of the Arabian hills, seen as through a magnificent frame of sculptured stone. You enter, and, on either side, prostrate columns, mutilated colossi, headless sphinxes, and huge fragments of stone, that have toppled down from the lofty roofs, and carried destruction in their fall, lie scattered around; and then the hypostyle, the giant hall of Osirei, bursts upon you, like a forest of columns, each one,— and there are now a hundred and twenty-eight of them standing — measuring thirty-four feet in circumference, lofty in proportion and covered with a lavish profusion of painted sculptures, representing the deities and the sacred animals of Egyptian Pantheism mingled with the ovals of the greatest among the Pharaohs. In the centre runs a double row of columns, still larger and loftier than the lateral ones, surmounted by graceful lotus-flower capitals, and embellished with the same sacred subjects. The bas-reliefs and sculptures on the walls of the palace of Karnak are descriptive of the campaigns of its founder, Osirei, in Asia, and are executed in the best style of the best period of Egyptian art; in short, all that meets the eye is of surpassing

beauty; and no words can do justice to the effect produced by this amazing structure, in which grandeur of conception and delicacy of detail are so happily united. The Colosseum of



Rome, and the Christian Temples of St. Peter's, and St. Paul's, and of the Iglesia Mayor in Seville, mighty as they are, shrink into littleness when measured by the standard of Karnak; and Champollion, enthusiast as he was in all that concerned the creations of the Pharaohs, did not exaggerate when he averred, that "Aucun peuple, ancien ni moderne, n'a conçu l'art de l'archi-

tecture sur une échelle aussi sublime, aussi large, aussi grandiose que le firent les vieux Egyptiens; ils concevoient en hommes de cent pieds de haut, et l'imagination, qui, en Europe, s'élance bien au dessus de nos portiques, s'arrête et tombe impuissante aux pieds des cent quarante colonnes de la salle hypostyle de Karnak."

Temple or palace, whichever it was, this mighty structure stands unrivalled in beauty and grandeur, worthy of the genius and magnificence of its founder, the Pharaoh Osirei; whose name is encircled with a double halo in the annals of Egyptian history, as having bequeathed to his country the greatest temple and the greatest sovereign that it ever possessed—Karnak, and his son, Rhamses Sesostris! Here everything speaks of the glorious eighteenth dynasty; the famous race of Theban kings, who registered their great deeds upon the walls of their palaces and of their tombs, and left those solemn and mighty chronicles to unfold to succeeding ages—to new races—and to the followers of new faiths,—the history of the oldest civilization, of the most extraordinary people, and of the most mystical religion that the world ever produced. But although Osirei was the sole creator of the matchless hypostyle, the storied walls and columns of Karnak possess the

portraits, and record the achievements of many succeeding Pharaohs; among them, Sheshonk, the Shishak of the Bible, the conqueror of Rehoboam, who is represented returning in triumph to Thebes, after having sacked Jerusalem, and bringing in his train the captive Jewish king, with his arms bound behind his back, together with the numerous Hebrew prisoners he had taken, all of them bearing the peculiar and distinctive traits of the Jewish physiognomy. There are also Ptolemaic remains at Karnak; a temple dedicated to the Egyptian Venus, Athor; and a beautiful propylon, approaching more nearly to the form of a triumphal arch, than anything I have seen in this country.

In its original state the palace-temple of Karnak is said to have possessed twelve separate entrances, each furnished with at least three propyla, all guarded by colossal statues, and approached by long avenues, bordered with gigantic sphinxes, placed at very short intervals from each other. Five of these entrances, and their broken propyla still remain, together with parts of the avenues radiating from thence, and lined on either side with headless sphinxes, which, notwithstanding their mutilated state, present great beauty of design, and a character of majestic

repose and gravity, in harmony with the general physiognomy of Pharaonic architecture. One of these avenues descended from the great western propylon to the river side; and it is supposed that a corresponding one existed on the opposite bank, and formed the entrance to Gornou and Western Thebes. Another one formerly led from the southern gate of Karnak to the grand entrance of Luxor, and was the connecting link between the two temples. Part of that magnificent avenue still remains, with its shattered sphinxes drawn up on either side, like warriors who have suffered themselves to be cut down rather than abandon their posts; and although scarcely one among them retains its head, and that all are half buried in the sand, and shrouded with weeds, yet there is a solemn beauty and grandeur in the wreck, that approaches to sublimity, and fills one with a mingled awe and admiration, which newer and more perfect creations would be powerless to elicit.

The two granite obelisks standing at the eastern entrance of Karnak (and two others, broken into pieces, encumber the ground), are the loftiest that were ever erected, but they are less beautiful and elaborate in their sculptures than the obelisk at Luxor, and its pendant, now in

Paris; and, from the unfinished state of the northern face of the largest of them, it is evident that the hieroglyphics were executed after the obelisk had been erected. In one of the tombs at Assassief we saw paintings which represented the progress of sculptors chiselling a colossal statue; those at work on the upper parts were mounted upon wooden scaffoldings, placed at distances one above the other; and I imagine the embellishments of the obelisks must have been managed in the same way.

The ruthless destroyer, Cambyses, broke and defaced the splendid accessories to the kingly edifices of Thebes and Karnak; those which his soldiery could not overthrow, they mutilated, and the Persians were the only conquerors of Egypt who thus barbarously disfigured its temples and palaces; for the Macedonians and the Romans respected what the Persians had endeavoured to destroy; and even restored what these latter had succeeded in overthrowing. Yet it is related of Cambyses, that when, in the delirium of conquest, he had caused the royal city of Thebes to be devastated by fire, and that he was watching the fatal progress of the flames, struck by the beauty of the obelisks as they towered serenely above the destroying element, he gave orders that

they should be spared; and the fires which had been lighted at their bases were accordingly quenched,—not, however, in time to save all, as is evident from the beautiful fragments that strew the ground at the eastern gate of Karnak.

Of the various foreign masters by whom Egypt was in turns possessed, the Persians alone have left no monuments of their double conquest and occupation of the land of the Pharaohs. They recorded their success in the ruins of the country they had vanquished; and the destruction of the royal cities and the magnificent temples that studded the Valley of the Nile would have argued a blind insensibility to the wonders of art, and a brutish ignorance of the advantages of civilization, were it not a fact that they carried off the principal artists and artizans of Egypt to Persia, and forced them to devote their genius and labours to the embellishment of that country; thereby demonstrating that their aim was to destroy and debase the conquered land, while they transplanted to the conquering one "the learning and the wisdom of Egypt." From that epoch dates the fall of Egyptian art; the creative genius of Egypt expired when she ceased to be free and independent; and from thenceforward she only attempted feeble imitations of

those bold inventions which had marked the days of her glory.

This afternoon we rode all over the plain to the northward of Western Thebes, which evidently contained the great Necropolis of the ancient city, as the whole ground is one continued series of vast mummy catacombs disposed in long galleries and suites of chambers, very neatly constructed, but without either painting or sculpture, or even plaster, to conceal the rudeness of the walls and partitions. The entrances to these sepulchral chambers very much resemble the catacombs of the new cemetery of Kensall Green, and I should imagine that the mummies must have been disposed in the same manner that the coffins are placed there. But not a single mummy is now forthcoming; the living have succeeded to the dead, and Arab villages are established in the burial vaults of the old Thebans.

As to ascertaining or determining the limits of ancient Thebes, we have vainly endeavoured to do so. The whole plain, from the western bank of the Nile to the foot of the rocky mountains which contain the royal tombs, is more or less scattered with the fragments of sacred edifices and their vast accessories, or with the yawn-

ing mouths of mummy-pits. But, was Thebes only composed of temples and of burial-grounds? Where were the walls of the city? where its "hundred gates?" And how were its citizens lodged? Probably as the people of Egypt now are, in mud hovels, the materials of which were furnished to them by the all-beneficent Nile; and the wonders of Egyptian architecture were reserved only for the sanctuaries of their gods and the palaces of their kings, which were frequently united under one roof—as the early rulers of the land were priests as well as princes. This would bear out the old story of despotism and oppression, of the comforts of the many sacrificed to the luxuries of the few, of a people impoverished in order that their rulers might live in golden palaces, did the remains of many such palaces exist; but the structures that have survived the sudden strife of War, and the slower and surer destroying powers of Time, are all of a sacred character. Diodorus Siculus, who visited Egypt while the memory of her greatness was still fresh in the minds of her people, and that in defiance of foreign supremacy, her laws, institutions, manners, and customs, continued to preserve their nationality, has said of the ancient Egyptians:—

"These people, who look upon the duration of life as a period of brief unimportance, contemplate, on the contrary, with the most serious attention the long memory which survives a virtuous career. It is for this reason that they designate the abodes of the living as inns, where they are lodged only as temporary passengers, while they bestow the name of eternal asylums upon the tombs of the dead, which are entered to be quitted no more. Thus, their kings have shown themselves indifferent, as it were, to the construction of their palaces, while they have exhausted all the resources at their command in the construction of their sepulchres."

And thus it is that the traveller, wandering over the plain of Thebes in quest of some tangible trace of its ancient population, finds nothing but their temples and their tombs! But, even had their frail habitations not vanished from the face of the earth,—had they remained perfect and entire as the houses of Pompeii,—has not the most eloquent of living writers * said: "Tout est tombeau chez un peuple qui n'est plus?"

* Chateaubriand.

CHAPTER XVI.

TEMPLE OF DENDERAH. — CLEOPATRA. — MOHAMMED ALI. — SEID HUSSEYN. — PATRIARCHAL FAMILY. — THE HAREEM. — THE KADUN. — THE GREAT-UNCLE. — AMUSEMENTS. — TURKISH DINNER.

Kenneh, January 3, 1846.

We commenced the year by the termination of our temple explorations at Denderah. This is one of those beautiful Ptolemaic structures, the architecture of which is as faultless as the sculptures are faulty. Beautiful indeed it must be, since I could really admire it after Karnak, which I thought had exhausted all my admiring capabilities, and, at the same time, so extended my wondering powers, that nothing *less* than the Great Pyramid of Ghizeh can now extract an exclamation from me! But with the grace and majesty of Denderah I was enchanted; and nothing that I have yet noticed in the peculiarities of Egyptian architecture has pleased me so much as the twenty-four colossal pillars that support the

pronaos of the temple, surmounted by quadrilateral capitals, each side containing a full face of Isis with the cow's ears, and wearing the usual antique Egyptian head-dress, the ends of which descend on each side of the throat down to where the bosom might be, were the bust represented, and form a graceful fluted termination to the capital. But destroyers have mercilessly defeatured the mild countenance of the moon-faced Isis, leaving nothing distinguishable but its round contour and elongated eyes. As the temple was built under the last of the Ptolemies, these devastations could not have been perpetrated by those wholesale destroyers of Egyptian art, the barbarous Persians of Cambyses; they are, therefore, attributable to the early Christians, who, in their zeal to propagate a new and purer faith, defaced, to the utmost of their power, the offending emblems of an idolatrous worship. Some of the columns of the first hall succeeding the pronaos, bear evident traces of fire having been applied to destroy them; and the interior dark chambers are so blackened with smoke, that to this added obscurity I must attribute my not having been able to distinguish the elaborate mythological embel-

lishments that some English tourists, with better eyes than mine, have so pompously described.

I shall enter into nothing like detail of the sculptures which I *did* see at Denderah; one of the outer walls of the temple represents the whole Pantheon of Egypt; monstrous hybrids, calculated to excite derision rather than veneration,—human forms with the heads of rams, of cows, of hawks, of vultures, of chacals, of crocodiles, of ibeses, of monkeys, crowned with the mitres of priesthood or royalty! These strange caricatures of course cover a hidden meaning, and are merely *symbols;* but if symbolical imagery was required to veil the mysteries of the Egyptian worship, why not have chosen one of a more exalting, more awe-inspiring description?

On another portion of the walls is represented "Egypt's graceful Queen," that "serpent of old Nile," the famous Cleopatra, with the son she bore to Julius Cæsar, the young Ptolemy Cæsarion. As these are undoubted portraits, I contemplated them with peculiar interest and curiosity; but in vain I sought in the profile of Cleopatra for that surpassing beauty which had made captive her Roman masters, and cost a world to Antony. The features possess none

of that delicate charm which I expected to find in them, and the expression (if expression there can be found in Egyptian sculpture) is stern and unintellectual. If this portrait is a resemblance, it is, therefore, to be presumed that the secret of Cleopatra's seductive charm lay not so much in her beauty as in her grace and powers of fascination, and that she was one of those syrens whose spells take effect upon the hearts of mankind through the insidious channel of the ear, as well as through the more vulgar medium of the eye. The portrait of Cleopatra at Philæ is even coarser and less attractive than the one at Denderah; and there is a heaviness and animal expression in the lower part of the face which is scarcely redeemed by the beauty of the upper features. Altogether, the countenance of the Cleopatra of Philæ reminded me of the portraits of Madame George Sand; the expression of which does not harmonize with the idea one is apt to form of the fair original from the genius, the passion, and the poetry that breathe in every line of her writings.

An Arab town, now deserted and in ruins, has been built upon the roof of the temple of Denderah, and all around its outer wall to a

considerable extent; and the rubbish of the falling tenements, together with that extraordinary accumulation of broken pottery which is to be found in the immediate vicinity of every Egyptian temple (and which makes one fancy that every water-jar and pipe-bowl fractured since the Deluge, has been amassed in that individual spot), renders the act of either riding or walking round the great edifice both toilsome and difficult. We managed to achieve it, however, and peeped into the little Typhonium standing near to it, and which is of the same date; but the walls of its two small chambers are so begrimed with smoke that we did not even endeavour to decypher their ornaments. The columns of the portico, and of a colonnade that originally surrounded it, are surmounted by quadrilateral capitals, each side bearing full-length figures of the monster Typhon, the destroyer of Osiris, and the presiding deity of the place.

When Doctor Bowring was in Egypt, he, in conjunction with some other gifted individuals, endeavoured to interest the Viceroy in the preservation of those noble remains of antiquity, so many of which had been completely destroyed, in order to utilize their materials.

Among these was the Temple of Denderah, the great propylon of which had been nearly demolished for the purpose of constructing some modern edifice with the blocks of which it was composed. Mohammed Ali, apparently convinced by the Doctor's argument, promised very fairly that he would become the guardian instead of the destroyer of the antique monuments which lend such an interest to his dominions; but when it was proposed that a Commission should be formed for that purpose, and that Dr. Bowring, and the gentleman who had seconded him, should be named members of it, the Viceroy peremptorily negatived the request, declaring that he himself would become the sole conservator of the temples of Egypt, and that he would commence repairing the injuries that had been inflicted upon that of Denderah. Some time afterwards, one of the gentlemen who was to have composed the Commission, visited Denderah, and found that Mohammed Ali had fulfilled his undertaking respecting the temple by causing a hideous double wall to be built up from the dilapidated propylon to the beautiful façade of the temple, which is half masked and wholly disfigured by this unsightly avenue; as for the

interior of the sacred edifice, it had been converted into an occasional stable for the cattle which is brought from the upper country for his Highness's use,—and precisely in that state we found it.

Such are Mohammed Ali's ideas of preserving the gems of Egyptian art! and this being the case, it is scarcely to be wondered at that his subjects evince such barbarian carelessness on the subject. Even when these people do not destroy —and they are too indolent, too apathetic to do so—they allow every vestige of art to perish around them for want of a little of that energetic spirit of conservatism which has rendered Italy the museum of the whole world.

Denderah is situated opposite to Kenneh, where our boat is moored, and on the other side of the river at some distance from the water's side. The ride to it was delightful, through something like green fields, with here and there a bouquet of luxuriant date-palms;—the sky so sunny and the air so mild and genial that we could scarcely persuade ourselves that it was New Year's Day. On our return to the Dahabieh we found a newly arrived boat from Cairo lying alongside, and were visited by its occupants, three English gentlemen going to Dongola. Just as they took their

leave of us, Seid Husseyn, our Arab Consular Agent at Kenneh, and his son (who is agent for the East India Company at Cosseir,) and young grandson, rode down like a company of Patriarchs, upon their asses, each one attended by a slave, to pay us a visit and to invite us to dine with the old gentleman to-morrow, which we of course accepted. They were in their robes of ceremony, long pelisses of fine scarlet cloth, under which were striped silk caftans; and over their enormous white turbans each wore an Indian long shawl gracefully arranged, one end of it wound round their necks like a boa, and the other thrown over their heads like a veil. We gave them coffee and sherbet, but the young boy was not suffered to partake of these refreshments, as he is never allowed to eat or drink in his father's and grandfather's presence. Such are Arab notions of filial respect!

On terminating their visit, the old gentleman kissed me on both cheeks, a mode of salutation that would have somewhat startled me had he not desired our Dragoman to explain that he saluted me as he would do a daughter, which at once converted an apparent freedom into a delicate compliment. So we parted excellent friends, with a full understanding that the whole of the

morrow was to be passed in his patriarchal habitation.

After Seid Husseyn's departure we found that his hospitality was not quite as disinterested as we had imagined, and Mohammed made us laugh heartily by the account he gave us of the Arab-like foray which the old gentleman was disposed to make amongst our stock of provisions, inquiring privately of him whether we had any Maraschino, any sweet wine, any maccaroni, any wax-lights, or indeed *anything* very good, of which he (Mohammed) could contrive to transmit a portion to the Consular residence? Mohammed adroitly replied that we were almost at the end of our stores, and must take in a stock of provisions at Kenneh; but as soon as he had communicated this little side colloquy to us, we directed him to send two bottles of wine, some tablets of portable soup, and some maccaroni to Seid Husseyn's house with our regrets that we had no Maraschino to add to them, and an assurance that whenever we returned to Kenneh we would make a point of bringing him some. This trait *à la Caleb Balderstone* made us suspect that we should meet with a Master of Ravenswood's repast at our worthy Consular Agent's; especially as we found that it is the custom of the

wealthy old Arab to levy similar contributions upon all the travellers' boats going up and down the Nile, by which process he contrives to remunerate himself for the hospitalities he exercises towards our country-people. Indeed the organ of acquisitiveness appears to be so largely developed in his case, that he does not disdain to receive the meanest articles, provided they come to him in the shape of a present, and he regularly applies for, and obtains from the dragomans of the various boats all the wine and porter bottles that have been emptied by their masters during their voyage on the Nile. As Seid Husseyn is very rich, this must be looked upon in the light of a mania; and indeed it is only fair to add that he gives much more than he receives, for his dinner to us yesterday was abundant and excellent, and pressed upon us with a hearty good-will and hospitality that left no room to doubt of its sincerity.

The early part of the day was passed by me in the hareem of Seid Husseyn, which contains four distinct families, all living together apparently in the greatest harmony; namely, his own young wife (a Circassian slave whom he has married within the last two or three years), and her young child; the wife of his eldest son, Seid Me-

hemet, the East India Company's Agent, and their several children; the wife of his second son, Ali Seid, who has no family; and the wife of Mehemet Husseyn's eldest son, a youth of eighteen, and their child; and, strange to say, the old great-grandfather, Seid* Husseyn, who is seventy-five, has the youngest and prettiest wife of them all!

I arrived there at noon and was received at the entrance of the house by Seid Husseyn himself; who lifted me from my donkey, kissed me on both cheeks, and consigned me to the care of his chief eunuch, by whom I was handed across the court to the back part of the building and up stairs to the hareem. At the foot of the last flight of stairs I was met by the Kadun, or chief lady of the hareem, Seid Husseyn's young Circassian wife, and was introduced by her into the innermost apartment, and placed in the corner of ceremony of the low sofa that runs round two sides of the room. This young woman has pretty features and a sweet countenance, but her face falls very short of English ideas of Circassian beauty; and her figure is already out of all man-

* *Seid* is not a name but a title, (signifying in Arabic, *Lord*) which is adopted by every Shereef, or descendant of the Prophet.

ner of shape from a commencement of *embonpoint* which bids fair to make a monster of her in a very few years. Her dress was neither becoming or well put on, and partook of the fashion of Constantinople and Cairo mingled together. It was composed of a Turkish *anteree* (or long dress open at the sides) of embroidered silk lined with crimson, a short vest and trousers of white cotton, English cotton stockings, and red slippers; which latter she kicked off at the entrance of the hareem. She wore the Egyptian tarboosh (Fez cap) bound on with an embroidered handkerchief; and a second handkerchief of another colour was pinned under her chin like a child's bib, the two corners of the upper end being drawn up so as to cover her ears, and the lower part falling over her bosom as low as where the waist *ought* to be, (but waists are not to be found in these masses of flesh); this part of the Egyptian ladies' dress is exactly like the *guimpe* worn by nuns. Her hair was cut short upon her forehead and combed down straight to meet the eyebrows, the back part tressed into several plaits and hanging over her shoulders, and over the whole head-gear was thrown a large red Indian shawl of very ordinary quality, which served at once for veil and mantle. When seated by my side she looked like a shape-

less bundle of clothes thrown into a corner; but when she arose and walked about the room, there was something ludicrous in the way in which the ponderous machine rolled about; all the fleshy protuberances presenting themselves in front, and quivering under the ungenial exertion.

The Kadun's two daughters-in-law, considerably her elders, and arrived at a state of obesity that amounts to deformity, made their appearance soon after, attended by her grand-daughter-in-law, whom I shall designate as Black Eyes, from the extraordinary darkness of her eyes, the only handsome pair contained in the whole hareem, and which appeared still darker and brighter from the quantity of kohl round them, and the clear paleness of her complexion. This young lady, whose countenance is full of vivacity and expression, reminded me strongly of poor Malibran, in one of those exuberant flow of spirits which used to appear like the joyous outbreak of a happy child; and her clever face and animated manner immediately prepossessed me in her favour. All the children followed their respective mammas; some growing into lanky girls and boys dressed like men and women, some toddling about in red bournouses, and some carried in the arms of negress slaves, but not

one of them betraying a shadow of good looks; and, from this large sample, I infer that the ugliness of Egyptian children is not confined merely to the Fellah race. The last-born son of our old host brought up the rear, a sturdy young gentleman two years old; who, although he runs about and talks, and is moreover the uncle of Black Eyes' husband, and the great-uncle of their child, is not yet weaned. It was reserved for the patriarchal communities of Egypt to present to my notice the phenomenon of a sucking grand-uncle!

When this family party had squatted themselves on the ground in a semicircle before me, I was somewhat surprised at seeing the black eunuch take his seat familiarly among them; and not a little startled when Black Eyes, after calling my attention to the ugliness of his face, caught hold of him by the chin, and gave him a hearty kiss. Then began a close examination of everything I wore; and, before it was concluded, I really feared that I should have been completely undressed. It was evident, from the curiosity and surprise evinced by them, and their frequent exclamations of *Wallah!* and *Mashallah!* that I was the first European woman who had become their guest. Do not suppose, how-

ever, that I am going to give you the remarks elicited by my toilette; for although everybody talked to me, and that I talked to all, not one word did we mutually understand, as I had no interpreter with me. That trifling impediment to conversation, not comprehending what is said, did not, however, render us less loquacious; and at last everybody spoke at once, and no one listened, and I really fancied that I had fallen into a nest of magpies.

While this *tintamarre* was going on, I made use of my eyes in noticing the peculiarities of the hareem. No elegance — no nicety even; white-washed walls not over clean; two or three arched recesses, with water-bottles and sherbet glasses in them; small Persian carpets spread over the floor, and a low sofa running round two sides of the room. In an adjacent apartment were cane sofas; and the large projecting latticed window, which forms so peculiar a feature in Egyptian houses, was fitted up with a carpet and cushions to lean upon. A number of female visitors arrived one after another, invited no doubt to look at the lion that had fallen among them in the shape of a Frank stranger; and coffee, sherbet, oranges, and dried raisins soaked in aniseed were served to us; and when the room

could furnish no more cushions for the guests, I heard a tinkling of metal castanets in the ante-chamber, and a young Abyssinian eunuch ushered in the Ghawazees of Kenneh for my amusement.

I would gladly have dispensed with this part of the entertainment, for my curiosity had been so thoroughly satisfied by what I had seen of Sofia's performance at Esneh that I never wished to witness a similar exhibition. But there was no escape for me; and as on this occasion no restriction was laid upon the Ghawazee's performance, but, on the contrary, the more cynical it became the greater was the applause bestowed upon it, I was not only wearied but disgusted by what I saw. It would be impossible to describe the strange vagaries indulged in by these women; and there was something not only undignified but indelicate in the freedoms taken with them by the ladies of the hareem; and although it is notorious that the Ghawazees are women of abandoned character, they were made to sit down familiarly among us between each dance, and allowed to bandy their practical jokes with their superiors with an effrontery that was quite revolting to me. Imagine four mortal hours passed by me in this

manner; and not only obliged to *endure*, but to appear to *enjoy* what was going on! Just when I fancied that I could bear it no longer, I received the welcome summons that liberated me from the hareem, and conveyed me to the apartment of Seid Husseyn, where I and my party were to dine with him and his sons *à la Turque*.

Of course you are sufficiently conversant with Oriental manners to know that no Mahometan wives are ever allowed to dine with their husbands, therefore you will understand that none of the ladies accompanied me to the eating-room.

These Turkish dinners are barbarous things; for although the argument of fingers having been made before knives and forks were invented may appear very fine and philosophical in theory, the practice of it is very likely to put one's philosophy to a severe test. A low stand is placed in the centre of the room, and upon it is laid a large circular metal tray, inscribed with some verses from the Koran; flat cakes of bread are set round upon it, and the guests are furnished with napkins and desired to take their seats upon low cushions round the tray, when a bowl of *tchorba* (or soup) is placed in the middle, and each person, having received a spoon, is invited to dip it in and eat. When the soup is removed,

the rest of the dinner is put down all at once; the ragouts and roasts in round dishes, and the sweet things and salads in saucers. These are dispatched in a very short time; for the Moslems sit down to table to *eat*, and not to *talk*; each person breaks off small portions of his bread, and dipping them into whatever dish he fancies, fishes up each time a morsel which he carries to his mouth, and so on till he has partaken of everything: and all this is done with the right hand alone, for to use the left hand, either in feeding himself or in presenting food to a stranger, is looked upon as the greatest of abominations by every Mahometan.

Seid Husseyn's two eldest sons only were allowed to sit down at table with him; two younger ones, fine young men, held lanthorns for us while we dined, looking on with the stillness of statues, while the slaves performed the service of the table; and they, together with his grandsons, were only suffered to eat when he had risen from his repast. Seid Ali, one of the privileged elder sons, did not take his place at the tray until dinner was nearly over. Seated at the open window with his watch in his hand, and his eyes fixed upon the western horizon, he appeared absorbed in watching the setting sun;

and when at last its golden disk had finally disappeared, he arose and placed himself among us, informing us that he was under a religious vow not to taste food until sunset during this whole month, and that no degree of hunger or thirst, no duties of hospitality even, could tempt him to infringe upon this sacred obligation.

Seid Husseyn's dinner was not only copious, but really very good; and if I had only been allowed a plate, and knife and fork, I think I should even have enjoyed it. The first dish served was a rice soup, acidulated with lemon juice, such as I have often eaten at Constantinople; and, when that was removed, a dozen dishes of all sorts of Turkish ragouts and *dolmas* succeeded, crowned by a roast lamb stuffed with rice and raisins in the centre, and various saucers of salads and preserves filling up every interstice of the tray. Of course I conformed with the custom of the country, and dipped my bread courageously into the dishes, as I saw every one else do, but with no appetite, as you may imagine; and it was not increased by the Moslem gallantry of my old host, by whom I was seated, and who made a point of selecting from every dish the most delicate morsels for me with his own fingers, and putting them into

my mouth. This, you know, is the *ne plus ultra* of Eastern hospitality and courtesy, and woe betide the reputation of the guest who ventures to reject it! When the ragouts had been despatched they fell upon the lamb, and here I really thought that a knife and fork *must* be resorted to; but not at all! Seid Husseyn commenced the attack by pinching off a small portion of meat, and putting it into my mouth; and every body helped themselves in the same manner, until the poor lamb looked as if it had been worried by dogs or gnawed by rats. A large dish of pilaf replaced the lamb, and was as speedily disposed of; and then the sweets in turn vanished, and we all rose from table: but, during the whole progress of the repast, no sign of the good wine we had sent to Seid Husseyn, and indeed no sign of anything to drink save Nile water! One of the slaves then brought a large metal basin and ewer and a piece of soap, and poured water over the hands of each person in turn, while another presented napkins to dry them with. Coffee and pipes were lastly introduced; and, when they were discussed, I was conducted back to the hareem to make my adieux to its fair inmates, and exchanged kisses with each and all of them.

Thus terminated Seid Husseyn's hospitalities; and we rode to the Dahabieh lighted by two of his slaves with *fenooses*, and attended not only by Mohammed, but by Reis Ali and four of our sailors, who came armed with long sticks to escort us back to the boat, and awakened the echoes of Kenneh with their joyous choruses as they gambolled before us, performing all sorts of antics.

CHAPTER XVII.

LIBERAL ARRANGEMENT. — VISITS. — EXCAVATIONS. — SHEIKH HARIDI.—E'SIOUT.—THE PASHA'S DONKEYS.—STABL ANTAR. —THE BASTINADO. — UNFAVOURABLE IMPRESSIONS. — SELIM PASHA.—ROMANCE OF REAL LIFE.—DENOUEMENT.

E'Siout, Jan. 7, 1846.

Before we quitted Kenneh, the accidental circumstance of a Dahabieh arriving from Cairo with a sick lady on board, brought to our knowledge one of those liberal and praiseworthy regulations emanating from the Viceroy, which, I am sorry to say, has no parallel in any Christian country in which I have yet travelled. It would appear, that in every considerable town on the banks of the Nile a Frank physician is established, who receives a yearly salary from the Egyptian government for visiting the sick, and providing them with medicines gratis. The Hakim Bashi settled at Kenneh is an Italian of some skill, and of extreme probity. He was called in to attend the invalid in question, a French lady,

Madame B—, and not only prescribed for her, but caused the medicines her case required to be sent to her; but when Monsieur B—, ignorant of the regulation I have above alluded to, attempted to fee the physician, and pay the apothecary's bill, he was met by a firm and uncompromising refusal on the doctor's part to receive remuneration for either visits or drugs. He said that he was paid by the Viceroy for providing both to all who might require them, and that he made no distinction between natives and strangers. Now, is not this noble, and well worthy of imitation?

On the 4th we reached Girgeh, once the capital of Upper Egypt, and landed for an hour; but, although it has more pretensions to be called a town than any place we have seen in the Upper Country, we found nothing within its walls worthy of notice. Near to Girgeh we met three Dahabiehs, one carrying the Austrian flag, which we found to contain Prince Collaredo Mansfeldt and his nephew, Count Neipperg, bound for Dongola and Sennaar; the other two having on board Lord L— and the Honourable Mr. R—, and their respective parties, all of whom paid a visit to the Swift, and brought us the latest news from Europe; in return for which we gave them hints

gathered from our experience in the Upper Country. It was from these gentlemen that we learned the late ministerial changes in England, and the reinstatement of Sir Robert Peel into power. These are pleasant rencontres when one has been cut off from all European communication for so many weeks as we have been; and it is really surprising how glad strangers appear to be to see each other under these circumstances, and how extremely communicative everybody grows in a few minutes.

On the 5th the weather was unpleasantly cold and cloudy, and the wind blew with such violence up the river that our rowers could make no head against it, and we were obliged to remain the greater part of the day tied to the eastern bank, under a stupendous mountain, or rather cliff, called Sheikh Haridi, the face of which presents numerous excavations, in all probability containing tombs. One of these excavations in particular, which, from the perpendicular form of the cliff, is most difficult to approach, retains evident traces of the commencement of a rock-cut temple, or *speos*, nearly as large as Ibsamboul. Three entrances are pierced into the living rock, and enormous rough pillars support the weight of the superimpending mountain. Who knows but

that this rugged excavation may have been one of the earliest attempts of the Egyptians to produce that peculiar description of religious sanctuary which they afterwards brought to so marvellous a degree of perfection, and that in the rough plan of the cavern of Sheikh Haridi may have originated the idea from which sprung the magnificent creation of Ibsamboul? A little beyond this excavation there is a vast separation in the mountain, which looks as if it had been cleft in twain by some convulsion of nature; and in the narrow valley formed by it is the tomb of a holy man, Sheikh Haridi, whose name has been bestowed upon the whole rocky district. This tomb is supposed to possess miraculous powers of sanctity, and is an object of great veneration to the Arab population; but the histories related to us of the wonderful results obtained by a visit to the sainted spot, and the assurance that the Sheikh occasionally revisits it in the form of a serpent, did not tempt us to descend the rocky path leading to it, which is both difficult and dangerous; and we contented ourselves with looking down from the mountain upon the little cupola that covers the Sheikh's remains.

This morning (the 7th) we arrived at E'Siout, now the capital of Upper Egypt, and the seat of

government of Selim Pasha, whose authority extends from this place to the Second Cataract. Mohammed immediately communicated with the Pasha's dragoman, who made known to his Excellency that a boat with English travellers had arrived; and in a short time his Ghawass came to us with a most polite message, stating, that Selim Pasha was in great grief, occasioned by the dangerous illness of his daughter; that for several days he had not left the hareem on that account, and had sat up the whole of the preceding night with the sufferer; but that if we would visit the tombs and temples in the vicinity of E'Siout—(for which purpose he sent us his own donkeys and grooms)—his Excellency would afterwards on his return from the mosque, at three o'clock, give us an audience. To this gracious attention was added all sorts of apologies for not being able to send his horses for our use, this being the season when they are all out at grass, or fed in the stable upon a sort of clover, called *bercine*, and in Egypt they are never ridden during that period.

But the donkeys he sent us were such splendid animals, so large, so full of animation, so beautifully caparisoned, that when we looked at them it was impossible to regret the absence of horses;

and, for my own part, I found the delightful elastic amble of the one I rode preferable to the paces of the best lady's horse in the world. Two Saises, or grooms, attended us on foot, and the graceful costume of these men was quite worthy of the beautiful animals they accompanied; close vests of white cotton braided, very full drawers, descending only to the knee, of the same materials, an ample blue garment worn over all, the loose sleeves of which were gracefully drawn up with thick cords of dark blue silk and gold, which, crossing over the back, terminated in large tassels on the shoulder, large snow-white turbans, and red slippers. The Pasha's Ghawass, enveloped in a large white bournous, rode before us; and thus escorted we proceeded to visit Stabl Antar, by which name the excavations in the rocks, at about three miles distance from the the town, are known. Why the name of the famous hero of Arab song and romance should have been bestowed upon this spot, I know not; unless in some of his fabulous exploits he may have stabled his steeds in the rude rock-cut temples whose general appearance and hieroglyphic embellishment bespeak an antiquity far more remote than anything we have yet seen. There are also extraordinary mummy pits cut

into the solid rock, which are supposed to have been devoted to the mummies of wolves; hence probaby the name of Lycopolis, by which E'Siout was known in the time of the ancients.

The road to Stabl Antar is rugged and difficult of access in the latter part, but our wonderful donkeys stepped up the craggy path like gazelles; at last, when we reached a very formidable looking ascent, the two Saises, who had never quitted my side, lifted me from my saddle before I knew what they were about, and carried me between them into the temple. The view from these heights is enchanting; the environs of E'Siout are charming, and the town itself, with its numerous minarets and orange gardens, forms a beautiful object in the scene. Besides, E'Siout is, after Cairo, the most considerable town in Egypt, as we afterwards found when we rode through its spacious and populous bazaars; and although there is no architecture to be seen in it comparable to that of Cairo, where every street is a picture, yet there are very nice looking detached houses surrounded by gardens, which give an idea of ease and comfort rarely to be met with in this half-barbarous country.

At one o'clock we had terminated our sight-seeing, and we found Reis Ali very anxious to

depart; a favourable wind having sprung up, which it was important for us to profit by, as we have been struggling against contrary ones for the last few days, and making but slow progress. If we waited for the Pasha's audience, we should not be able to leave E'Siout till after four o'clock, when darkness would be coming on, and the wind would in all probability abandon us after night-fall. On the other hand, we were anxious to make our personal acknowledgments to Selim Pasha for his polite attentions, and unwilling to depart without seeing him. After a little deliberation, we rode to the palace, in the hope that we might be received by his Excellency before he went to mosque, and thus contrive to obtain both the ends we had in view. We were ushered into the Pasha's divan, while a slave proceeded to the hareem to ascertain whether his master was visible, and while he was gone, female curiosity prompted me to make a circuit of the vast room. Nothing to be seen in it but the eternal sofa lining three sides! At the lower end of the room lay something upon a mat in a corner; I took it up—it was the horrid bastinado apparatus, the wooden bars all stained with blood! I let the instrument of torture fall from my hands as though it had been red-hot

iron that burnt into my flesh, and felt quite relieved when the Pasha's dragoman came to tell us that his Excellency was asleep, and that after the watchful night he had passed, his attendants would not venture to awaken him to deliver our message. I say that I felt relieved (although but a few moments before I had been anxious beyond measure for an audience), for the sight of those blood-stained sticks had indisposed me against Selim Pasha, and I should have looked upon him as upon one of those barbarous tyrants of the middle ages (of whom, thank Heaven! we *now* know nothing except through the medium of novels and melo-dramas), whose halls of judgement always communicated with the torture-chamber, and who spilt human blood with as much indifference as though it had been so much dirty water. We therefore rode back to the Dahabieh, embarked, and, to the great joy of Reis Ali, decided upon immediately departing. And now, while the minarets of E'Siout are still in sight, I trace these lines to you, and will terminate them by telling you *why* I was so anxious to see Selim Pasha.

It is not often that romance mingles with the dull materialism of Turkish existence, but Selim Pasha has been (if report speaks true, and mind I

do not vouch for the truth of what has been told me), the hero of an incident as romantic as the most ravenous concocter of what the French call "*la literature échevelée*," could desire for the groundwork of two volumes of sentiment, passion, and despair.

Selim Pasha is a Circassian by birth, having been brought into Egypt in his childhood, when the Memlooks were in power, and when they were in the habit of recruiting their forces by importing young slaves from Circassia, bringing them up in their own houses, and reserving them to fill up the vacancies which death made in their numbers. Soon after Mohammed Ali was raised to the Pashalik of Egypt, the young Selim fell under his observation; his appearance and address pleased the new dignitary, and from that moment dated his good fortune, for he became the especial favourite and *protégé* of the ruler of Egypt.

It would appear that the young Circassian served his new protector faithfully; for amidst the struggles and dissensions which marked the early period of Mohammed Ali's accession to power, when treason and treachery were every-day occurrences, and the friend of to-day became the enemy of to-morrow, Selim remained steadily attached to the Pasha's party, and reaped the benefit

of his fidelity by an increase of favour and an accumulation of honours. While still very young he was created a Bey; and a few years afterwards, as a crowning proof of regard, Mohammed Ali proposed to give him a wife from his own hareem, a young slave whose beauty and accomplishments had rendered her for awhile the chief favourite of her master.

These arrangements, startling to European notions of propriety, are nevertheless of common occurrence in the East, and no Turk considers himself dishonoured by receiving a wife so circumstanced from the hands of his patron. But, even should the gift be unwelcome, it cannot be refused, unless the *protégé* is willing to incur the loss of favour, and forfeiture of advancement, which such an offence as a rejection would entail upon him. Selim Bey dreamed not of refusing "the good the gods dispensed" through the medium of the Pasha: he signified his entire contentment, and the fulness of his joy at being thus distinguished, in all the florid eloquence of Oriental hyperbole, and having learned that his bride was to be portioned by his master with an allowance of ten purses* a month, and a suitable

* The amount of a purse is five hundred piastres, about five pounds English.

residence handsomely furnished, he felt no further anxiety on the subject, save to testify his sense of the honour bestowed upon him by rendering the marriage-gifts to be presented to his bride on the day when she entered his hareem as magnificent as possible.

The seclusion in which the Turkish and Egyptian women live, confined in the hareem, wholly apart from the male part of the community, and never quitting it to take the air, unless they are so muffled up as to render it impossible for them to be recognized even by their husbands and fathers, does not, however, preclude the possibility of some knowledge of their personal appearance being obtained by those interested in ascertaining whether the exterior of their future wives is attractive, or the reverse, and who have no opportunity of judging for themselves, until the marriage ceremony has been performed, and that it is too late to retract, even although bitter disappointment should follow the critical moment of unveiling their bride's face for the first time. In Cairo, as well as in Constantinople, certain old Jewish and Armenian women, whose trade it is to purchase the cast-off finery of the great hareems, are privileged to see and converse with the beauties immured therein; and in the most decorous

houses in Cairo, from the Viceroy's establishment downward, the Ghawazees are permitted to exhibit their talents in the hareem whenever a Fantasia (the Arab designation for an entertainment) is given. Both of these classes of women are accessible to the single men of the place, and are never loth to communicate to them all they are curious to ascertain about the fair prisoners.

Selim Bey had contrived to learn through one or other of those sources that his intended wife was beautiful in face and form, young, gentle, and accomplished,—that she wrote like an Effendi, sung like an Alme, and danced—not like a Ghawazee—but in the more graceful and less immodest fashion of Stamboul, where she had been educated. This was more than enough to inflame the imagination of the young man, and he became enamoured of the image described to him, and sighed for the moment that was to render him the possessor of such a treasure.

At last it arrived. The lengthened preliminary ceremonies of Egyptian marriages, which generally consume several days, commenced and appeared eternal to the impatient bridegroom. *The day of the bath*, when the bride, accompanied by all her female friends, made her ablutions; the *day of the henna*, when her hands were dyed, and

that she received the wedding-gifts presented to her by all her late companions, the inmates of the Pasha's hareem; the agreement pronounced by the bride and bridegroom on either side of a closed door, and witnessed by the Cadi, to take each other for man and wife, — all had slowly passed by, and the long-sighed-for day, in the evening of which the bride is conveyed in state to her husband's house, was at length ushered in. The gifts prepared by Selim Bey for the fair Hafiza, consisting of diamond ornaments, cashmere shawls, pieces of gold and silver stuffs, mirrors set in jewels, costly perfumery, and a profusion of the most delicate sweetmeats, were arranged in silver baskets, placed upon trays covered with scarlet cashmere fringed with gold, and a light veil of azure gauze thrown over them; and were borne upon the heads of Selim Bey's slaves, in magnificent new dresses, preceded by a black eunuch on horseback, through the principal streets of the city to the bridegroom's house. This ceremony took place in the middle of the day, and it was remarked that never had greater splendour or better taste been displayed at a private marriage. Some time afterwards Selim Bey proceeded privately to his new residence, in order to be there to receive his bride.

A little before sunset the fair Hafiza was conveyed from the Pasha's hareem in the citadel, to her new home, attended by a number of female slaves who were to form her household; all mounted upon magnificent asses splendidly caparisoned, and escorted by her future guardians, the black eunuchs of Selim Bey. She was met at the entrance of the house by her husband, whose gallantry prompted him to pay her the honours reserved for princesses alone; he lifted her in his arms from the saddle, carried her up-stairs to the hareem, and after depositing her upon the square of silver damask spread over the corner of the sofa, in a splendid saloon, prostrated himself before her, and kissed her feet. Then rising, and taking his place by her side, he eagerly unfastened the circlet of diamonds that bound on the long scarlet cashmere which had hitherto completely concealed her form, face, even her eyes, from his view; and the envious veil falling to the ground, revealed to the happy bridegroom's gaze loveliness which surpassed even the description that had been made to him of it, and which was enhanced by the emotion betrayed by the fair creature herself. Pale and red by turns, her eyes cast to the ground, and trembling under the scrutinizing glance bent upon

her, she sat in silent fear lest the first view obtained of her by her husband had failed in engaging his sympathy. But the exclamation of admiration that burst from his lips reassured her, and the rapture of the moment was rendered complete by Hafiza confessing, that from the hareem lattices she had often contemplated Selim Bey, when he followed in the train of the Pasha, that in her eyes he had long excelled all others in beauty and grace, and that she knew from the joy she had experienced, when told that he was to become her husband, that his image had long dwelt in her heart.

Never did Mahometan marriage commence under such happy circumstances—never before did such interchange of tenderness and sentiment embellish the entrance of a Moslem bride into her husband's house. Their mutual vows were interrupted by Hafiza's slaves bringing in the nuptial repast; and in conformance with Turkish usages, the bride arose, and prepared to wait upon her husband as a handmaid, while he partook of it. The morose pride of Turkish husbands, and the inferior scale in which all females are classed by them, and which prevents their distinguishing between a wife and a slave, not only permits such a violation of the laws of gal-

lantry, but exacts that these services should be performed in silence; and when the bridegroom has been thus served, the bride is allowed to retire, and make her repast in another room. Something chivalrous, however, in the sentiments of Selim Bey, added to the honour he was desirous of paying to the wife bestowed upon him by the Pasha, forbade his complying with such a custom. He compelled Hafiza to seat herself once more by his side, and while he selected for her the most delicate morsels from the luxurious repast that was served to them, their mutual confidences recommenced, made up of tender questions and avowals,—the unwearying tautology of a new-born love which appeared to them to be the precursor of a long career of reciprocal affection.

And now for the first time Selim bethought him of asking Hafiza where she was born, and was answered, *in Circassia.*

In Circassia! It was a new bond of union between them,—the same land had given them birth, for he too was a Circassian! and Selim tenderly clasped the fair hand of his bride.

Did she know from what part of the country she came?—She was but eight years old when she had been sold, and sent to Constantinople, but she still remembered the place where she was

born, and she named it.—The village inhabited by her family?—She named it too. What was her father's name?—Khosrew. What her mother's?—Ameneh.

These questions had succeeded each other with increasing rapidity, and every answer returned, had appeared to heighten the eager emotions of Selim.

Had she any brothers? he continued with still deeper earnestness.—One. What was his name, and how old was he?—He was called Halil, and he was an infant in arms, when she had been sent from her country.

Selim appeared to breathe more freely. And had she never had another brother? he resumed. Yes, she had had an elder brother, named Schamyl, but she had no recollection of him, for he had been kidnapped shortly after she was born, and her parents had never heard of him more.

As Hafiza pronounced these last words the countenance of Selim assumed a deadly paleness; he gazed at her for a moment with wild and haggard eyes, then violently dashing from him the hand he held in both of his, he arose and rushed from the room.

Unable to account for the sudden frenzy ex-

hibited by her husband, the trembling Hafiza followed, and found him in an adjoining chamber, leaning against the wall for support, his face hidden in his hands.

"What means this violent emotion?" she inquired, timidly approaching him, "is my Selim ill?"

With a gesture of impatience he bade her begone.

"Selim, you are angry with me," she persisted, casting her arms round him; "how have I offended you, oh my husband?"

He struggled to break away from her, but in vain, for his strength appeared to have abandoned him. "Leave me, as you love Heaven!" he faltered in a tone of anguish. "Hafiza! our dream of love is at an end — *I am your lost* Brother!"

"God is great!" ejaculated Hafiza, shrinking back in consternation; "he has scattered ashes upon our head, but he has spared us the commission of a dreadful crime!"

* * * * *

The unnatural union was immediately dissolved, and both brother and sister eventually contracted more fortunate marriages. Selim

Bey in progress of time became Selim Pasha, and his long tenure of office as Governor of Upper Egypt, proves that to this day he continues to enjoy the favour of his patron, Mohammed Ali.

CHAPTER XVIII.

NILE VOYAGERS. — INVALIDS. — PUFF ANTICIPATORY. — CROCODILES.—BENI HASSAN.—PAINTINGS.—SEPULCHRAL ARCHITECTURE. — BEDRECHEIN. — CASTLES IN THE AIR. — COLOSSAL STATUE. — MEMPHIS. — IBIS MUMMIES. — PYRAMIDS OF SAKKARA. — SARCOPHAGUS. — LAST DAY ON THE NILE. — OUR CREW.—MOHAMMED.—RETURN TO CAIRO.

Off Beni Hassan, Jan. 9, 1846.

YESTERDAY was altogether spent by us in paying and receiving visits, for as we approach Cairo the boats of travellers going up the Nile come "thicker and faster" upon us. For six weeks we never saw the symptom of a sail appertaining to Europeans; but since our return from Philæ, nineteen boats have passed us, some going to the Second Cataract, some to the First, and some only to Thebes. Two of these contained French tourists, two Americans, one Austrian, and all the rest English, making with ourselves fifteen British flags now on the Nile; and we heard from the last comers that we are to meet two more boats to-morrow, one of them

containing the Bishop of Gibraltar. We certainly are a strange vagabondising nation!

These fugitive meetings afford sincere pleasure; the moment the flag of a Dahabieh is espied a shot is fired, the salute returned, the sail brailed up, and both boats meet at the bank, where a simultaneous outpouring of the travellers generally takes place. All ceremony is waived—both boats are visited—questions asked much faster than they can be answered; the up-goers being anxious to know what are the dangers of the Cataracts, the down-goers ravenous for news from Europe. A cordiality characterizes these transient visits, which the intercourse of months would not produce in the conventional atmosphere of courts and cities; and they are too short to admit of the *ennui* arising from them which so often proceeds from lengthened meetings with persons who style each other their very dear old friends; for at the end of ten or fifteen minutes, courtesy, or perhaps impatience, prompts one party to say to the other, "Really, I cannot allow you to lose the advantage of this fine wind for sailing up the river," or, "You must not delay taking advantage of this calm for rowing down." The gift of an old English newspaper generally seals the cordial separation,

and cards are exchanged, with anxious hopes of meeting again at Cairo or elsewhere.

These nineteen boats have contained only two ladies besides myself, namely the French invalid at Kenneh, and a Scotch lady in attendance upon a consumptive brother, who is running away from an European winter, and is ordered to try the effect of the sunny climate of Nubia (where winter resembles an Italian summer) in renovating a debilitated constitution sufficiently to enable him to face a Northern spring. Nor is this gentleman the only invalid we have met, by whom Egypt appears to be visited in quest of the Temple of Hygeia rather than of the Temples of the Pharaohs. Mr. P., Mr. G., Lord C. H., have all come out in the character of health-hunters; and a winter in this country is now thought preferable to one in Lisbon, Italy, Malta, or Madeira, in cases of affections of the lungs or of bronchitis. If English physicians continue thus to send their invalids to the Valley of the Nile in quest of health, I should not wonder if English speculators will soon start up, ready to build suitable winter residences for them, and that we shall one of these days hear of "Pharaoh Villas," "Ptolemy Terraces," and "Cleopatra Cottages," bordering the banks

of the Nile, and see newspaper advertisements setting forth in all the pompous redundancy of George Robins's phraseology something to the following effect:

TO INVALIDS.

That unique classical villa residence, and delightful winter retreat, RHAMSESVILLE, situated on Western Bank of the Nile, on the immediate confines of Nubia, and within a pleasant drive of the populous town of Es-souan, in the most salubrious climate in the world, the NICE of the ANCIENT ROMANS! and in the immediate vicinity of those highly desirable neighbourhoods, the ISLANDS of ELEPHANTINA and PHILÆ, is now to be let; consisting of a spacious furnished Mansion built in the purest style of Old Egyptian architecture, delightfully situated in a grove of Palm-trees, and combining THEBAN MAGNIFICENCE with ENGLISH COMFORT; stabling for six dromedaries, spacious gardens and farm well stocked with the tropical produce of that plentiful land. The windows command extensive views over the GOLDEN SANDS of NUBIA, and the magnificent scenery of the FIRST CATARACT, where, if solitude be desired, food may be found for "Meditation even to madness," and a bird's eye view of the Minarets of Es-souan affording

proof that should society be required, "the busy haunts of Man" are within reach. The right of FISHING IN THE NILE, and of shooting over the PRESERVES of the Two DESERTS will be conceded to the tenant. An omnibus runs twice a day past the Lodge Gates to Es-souan, and the GREAT DONGOLA AND SENNAAR RAILROAD passes within half a mile of the premises.

How do you like this puff anticipatory?

Yesterday we took our leave of the crocodiles near Manfaloot, the most northern part of the Nile where they are to be found. Ten of them were basking on a green bank in such a state of dreamy beatitude that they allowed us to approach within twenty yards of their resting-place before they stirred, when the contents of a double-barrelled gun fired among them caused nine to lumber leisurely into the water. One of them, however, much larger than the rest, and which from his size and dignity must be the Pasha of the crocodiles, remained so immoveable, his enormous mouth wide open, that our boatman declared he must be dead. An expedition was immediately organised to surround and capture him; a general arming took place *par précaution*, and the Dahabieh bore down upon

the enemy under a press of oars; but it was only when she touched the bank that the wily monster convinced us that he was all "alive and kicking," by performing a gentle *glissade* into the water, something resembling the launch of a seventy-four!

We passed three more Dahabiehs this morning between Manfaloot and Beni Hassan, making in all twenty-two that we have left behind us on their way up the Nile; and in the afternoon we reached Beni Hassan, whose famous rock excavations and tombs, looking like so many pigeon-holes in the cliff, lie at about half a mile from the bank, in so elevated a position, that at the first glance I declared them to be inaccessible to me. But Mohammed, who is inexhaustible in resource, declared that he would manage matters so as to enable me to reach the tombs without any fatigue; and accordingly he constructed an admirable sedan for me by lashing one of our cabin-chairs between two of the long poles used by our sailors when the boat runs a-ground. This machine was hoisted upon the shoulders of four of the crew, and I was thus carried up the ascent to the very entrance of the excavations in palanquin fashion.

The tombs of Beni Hassan are pronounced by

Sir Gardiner Wilkinson to be as old as the reign of Osirtasen, the Pharaoh of Joseph, or rather the Pharaoh under whose reign he came into Egypt, as the Patriarch's long life comprised the reigns of five Kings. If this be the case, they rank in antiquity next to the Pyramids, which are the oldest monuments, not only in Egypt, but in the world. The paintings in them, although less brilliant in colouring than those in the tombs of the Kings at Thebes, are, if possible, still more interesting, as affording us glimpses into the manners and customs of a far more remote antiquity. The subjects are of a less striking and imposing character; for instead of triumphal processions and mystical allegories, they are confined to more familiar subjects, such as agricultural and domestic occupations. A great portion of these designs are devoted to gymnastic exercises, especially wrestling, which seems to have been a favourite amusement of the ancient Egyptians, and brought to great perfection by them, as the most ingenious methods of attack and defence are there represented. Sporting scenes are also introduced, the animals, especially the antelopes or gazelles, beautifully drawn; and there are some curious evidences of the bastinado having been as much in vogue

with the Egyptians in the days of Osirtasen as in the days of Mohammed Ali, contained in a series of paintings setting forth the infliction of that odious punishment in exactly the same manner in use at this present time. The Arab proverb of *the stick being a gift sent from heaven for the benefit of mankind*, dates I suppose from "the wisdom of the ancients."

There is one group of figures among the paintings at Beni Hassan, which some scientific travellers have supposed to represent Joseph's brethren, from the peculiarity of the physiognomy, and the difference of costume, as well as of complexion, existing between them and the representations of the natives. Now, if these were indeed meant for those personages, may it not be inferred that Joseph's body was originally deposited in the tomb which contained these pictures of his family? We know from the Bible that "Joseph died, being an hundred and ten years old; and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt:" and we know, also, that when the Israelites left Egypt with Moses, they carried the body of Joseph with them, in accordance with the vow he had exacted from his people, when he said to them,—"And ye shall carry up my bones from hence." But those bones

must have rested somewhere during the three hundred years that intervened between the period of his death and the Exodus of the Israelites; and why not in the excavations of Beni Hassan, which were the creation of his own time?

The principal tombs are entered by large doorways hewn into the rock, and the first chambers are level with the entrance (not descended to by stairs, as in the case of the royal tombs at Thebes), and are light and spacious rooms, supported by columns, forming a part of the rock, some of them fashioned in the Doric order, (a proof that the Greeks, to whom the invention is ascribed, had only copied from the Egyptians); others—and these are by far the most beautiful—representing the slender stalks of the lotus bound together, the leaves forming the capital. The tombs are placed in a line, and extend to a great length along the face of the cliff, presenting a row of sepulchral abodes, the entrances to which are numbered as in a street; and from the esplanade that runs before these entrances there is a noble view over the river and the fertile land to a great extent. Unlike the gloomy valley of Biban el Moluk, all is light, sunshine, and air, upon these breezy heights; and if ever the tomb could be said to wear an inviting aspect, it

is at Beni Hassan, where nature and art appear to have combined to deprive the grave of its greatest horrors.

We descended at sunset, to partake of a dinner given to us by Reis Ali, who had put into requisition the markets of E'Siout to do us honour, and was nearly inconsolable at not being able to procure a bottle of champagne to add to the fine turkey, the whole lamb, the pilafs, and puddings he had prepared for us. Honest Reis Ali! I believe he would have given us his heart too if he thought we could have eaten it.

At anchor off Old Cairo, Jan. 14, 1846.

We continued to float calmly down the river to the never-ending songs of our boatmen, crossing several more Dahabiehs on their way to the Cataracts, but seeing nothing worthy of note except the distant Pyramids looming largely upon us as we advanced,—until the morning of the 13th (yesterday), when we arrived at the little village of Bedrechein, the nearest landing-place from which the Pyramids of Sakkara can be approached. There we went on shore, procured donkeys, and had a charming ride over the site of ancient Memphis, where now stands the village of Metrahineh, embosomed in a magnificent

forest of palm-trees. During the period of the inundation these palm-trees realize the hyperbole of "castles in the air," for, as the waters rise and approach the houses of Metrahineh, the population abandon their habitations, and establish temporary abodes in the palm-trees, where they construct a scaffolding which serves them to sit and sleep upon. Above their heads hang the clusters of dates which compose their food, and beneath their feet roll the waters of the Nile, where they slake their thirst, and thus they sustain themselves, and live like birds or monkeys, until the waters subsiding, once more enable them to descend and rebuild their mud hovels, which are always destroyed by the inundation. For the purposes of communication, an admirable causeway, elevated above the level of the water at high Nile, stretches all through the fertile district; and Mohammed Ali has caused several arches to be constructed at intervals, to admit the free circulation of the waters.

The once magnificent Memphis, the Noph of the Scriptures, the abode of royalty, the capital of Lower Egypt under the Pharaohs, has been swept irrecoverably from the face of the earth, and left no trace of temple or palace behind; nothing save the mutilated half of a colossal

statue of Rhamses Sesostris remains to tell of the ancient splendour of this city, whose desolation was foretold in the inspired words of prophecy.* This huge fragment now lies on its face in a large pool of water, which entirely concealed the features from us. They are said to possess great beauty and sweetness of expression, and have the merit of being uninjured, which is probably owing to their downward position; but I can only form a judgment of this fine relic from the engravings I have seen of it; all that we could distinguish of the original was an enormous ear and part of a Pharaonic head-dress; the rest appeared to us a shapeless mass.

A little farther on we stumbled upon a charming *morçeau* of antique statuary, half embedded in the soil, and judging from the portion that still remains visible, of extremely beautiful workmanship. It is a small statue of rose-coloured granite, which appears either to have formed part of an altar, or to have been an accessory to a statue of much larger dimensions,

* "Thus saith the Lord God; I will also destroy their idols, and I will cause their images to cease out of Noph, and there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt: and I will put a fear in the land of Egypt." . . . "And Noph shall have distresses daily."—*Ezekiel*, chap. xxx. ver. 13. 16.

as a considerable body of granite, of which it forms a part, is buried in the ground. This, and the quadrilateral capital of a column precisely like the Isis-headed capitals of the temple of Denderah, are the sole vestiges (besides the prostrate Sesostris) that we could trace of the royal city of Memphis. But we could judge of what it *had been* by its vast Necropolis, which covers an immense tract of the desert, entirely surrounding the Pyramids of Sakkara, and stretching away northward to those of Ghizeh. This dreary space is scattered from one end to the other with skulls and bones bleached white as snow, and other evidences of the reckless commerce which for years has been carried on with the spoils of the dead by the natives. The most beautiful objects in Doctor Abbott's museum at Cairo were brought from the tombs at Sakkara; but so thoroughly has the locality been ransacked by amateurs and antiquarians, that very little worth having is now to be purchased of the Arabs.

Here are the famous Ibis pits, containing the mummies of those sacred birds. I did not descend into them, but I purchased two of the mummies, which I caused to be brought out of them in my presence. One of these I opened

on the spot, to satisfy my curiosity; the other I shall preserve untouched. They are enclosed in earthen vessels, exactly like a chimney-pot, the aperture of which is sealed up with a strong cement; and the embalmed bird is rolled up in innumerable bandages of linen, strongly impregnated with bituminous preparation. Although, upon taking off these cerecloths, I found some of the larger feathers and all of the bones of the Ibis entire, the moment the air reached them they crumbled into dust. No traces of sacred writing, or of any other emblem, did we discover in this mummy.

The Pyramids of Sakkara lose very much upon being approached; their size is by no means overwhelming, and they are built in layers of masonry of very rough construction, and bear no trace of ever having had a smooth outward casing. One of them is in so degraded a condition, that it would be difficult to decide whether it were a construction or a natural mound of stones. It looks like one of those primeval graves upon which every passer-by religiously casts a protecting stone, until the grey cairn swells into a lofty pile. And may not those rude cairns have first suggested the idea of the Pyramids? I should say that those of

Sakkara are scarcely worth the trouble of visiting, were it not for the interest of the site they occupy, and the splendid view they command of the whole line of pyramids,—those of Dashour to the south; those of Ghizeh, to the north; and in the far distance, on the spur of the Mokattam hills, the citadel of Cairo,—beautiful assemblage of the old glories of the Pharaohs, and of the more graceful, but less durable, creations of the Caliphs!

There are some fine tombs at Sakkara, and we effected a descent into one of them; and found in its various chambers a profusion of hieroglyphics, in the very best style of art, and in perfect preservation. But you will easily perceive, from the tame tone of my letter, that I saw nothing in the whole place to excite my enthusiasm, or even my admiration, with the exception of a beautiful sarcophagus, lying in a hollow, at a short distance from the base of one of the pyramids, which was exhumed three years ago, and looks as fresh as if it had been made yesterday. It is of slate-stone, of a very dark grey colour, and is covered with hieroglyphics; the lid lies a few paces from it, and is already so far buried in the sand that our guides were obliged to remove the soil to enable us to see it. This

lid is carved like the tops of wooden mummy-chests, with the representation of a human form, the countenance soft and pleasing, the Egyptian head-dress beautifully executed, the hands crossed over the bosom, and the lower part of the figure in the shape of a mummy, and covered with hieroglyphics, which doubtless chronicle the name and worldly honours of the person whose body once tenanted this beautiful sarcophagus. The Arab guides told us, that when it was discovered, and opened by them, the only contents found within were the embalmed remains of some birds, a few trifling stone ornaments, and some scarabæi,—from which it may be inferred that it had already been opened at some earlier period, and rifled of its human mummy.

Our ride back to Bedrechein was delightful, through fragrant bean-fields and clumps of thorny mimosas, on which the camel loves to browse. The sun was sinking in the horizon, and its rays, falling obliquely upon the trunks of the lofty palm-trees, appeared to convert them into so many columns of fretted bronze; the pyramids standing out in sharp relief against the illuminated sky, assumed a beauty of aspect as they lessened in the distance, which they had not possessed when seen near. The melancholy creak-

ing of the sakkias were alone heard in the fields, — for in Egypt there are no singing-birds — at least I have not heard any,—and the ear is never greeted with those wild wood-notes which in England impart such a charm to an evening ramble in the fields, when from every bough the liquid gurgling of the thrush, the melodious whistle of the blackbird, and the clear monotonous note of the cuckoo are heard in sweet confusion, chaunting their vesper hymn to the setting sun. It was our last excursion from the Dahabieh, and this was to be our last night on board; and the thought saddened us; for our voyage has been one of such interest, we have had so much tranquil enjoyment, and have met with such good conduct — I will even say devotion — from our Egyptian attendants and crew, that we shall separate from every individual of them with sincere regret. And when we stepped on board, and found that during our absence everything had been packed up, and all the comfortable litter of books, work, and writing apparatus, — which gave such a home-look to our cabins, — removed for final departure, I felt myself growing quite pathetic at the idea that our pleasant days on the Nile had come to a close.

Shut up for two months and four days in a

boat with eighteen Arabs (during six weeks of which time we never beheld any European faces beyond our own), and, from our ignorance of Arabic, wholly dependant upon these men for our safety, comfort, and wellbeing, in the uncivilized regions we were traversing, we have never experienced the slightest annoyance from one of them, and have nothing but praise to bestow upon all. Indeed, there has ever been a thoughtful delicacy in their conduct, which I should not have looked for, and I am sure should not have met with, in civilized Europeans of their class. Whenever the Dahabieh stopped, if there was a wild flower within reach, or a branch of dates, or a curious pebble to be found, it was sure to be brought to me by some of them; and whenever I went on shore to walk, one would follow me with a chair, another with a bottle of water, and a third with an umbrella, lest I should be tired, or thirsty, or hot during my absence from the boat. We never thought of locking the cabin-doors when we went on shore, and never lost the value of a pin. In short, our Arabs have proved a living contradiction to the bad character we had heard of the whole race, without exception, from many Europeans, and of the absolute necessity there is of treating them like *brutes*, inac-

cessible to good feeling, and only to be led by the lash. We have treated them *like men*, and they have behaved to us like good and grateful men.

As for our dragoman, Mohammed Abdul Atti, he has been beyond all praise. To his excellent management and forethought are entirely owing the creature comforts we have enjoyed during our voyage; not only we have wanted for nothing, but we have had everything that the most fastidious appetite could require, and all arranged with as much nicety and elegance, and the service of the table performed with as much quiet regularity as it could have been in the best appointed house. He has so much method and order that he finds time for everything, and gets over the business of two or three servants without ever appearing to be in a hurry; and his predilection for English people and English customs renders him the most desirable person possible to accompany English travellers in the East. Not only has he been our dragoman, but caterer, *maitre d'hotel*, and confectioner; and under circumstances of peculiar difficulty, from the misconduct of one of our French servants, which lasted during the whole voyage, and was characterised by an inveterate malignity towards him

that had neither motive or excuse, he showed a good sense and forbearance which have gained him our esteem as well as our approbation.

After passing the night off Bedrechein, we dropped down the river this morning to Old Cairo; and while Mohammed has gone to Grand Cairo to secure rooms for us at Shepheard's Hotel and to bring back a carriage to transport us thither, I am finishing my dispatch which (as I shall certainly not find time to write for many days to come) will be evidence to you that we have terminated our Nile voyage in safety, and are once more in the City of the Caliphs!

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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